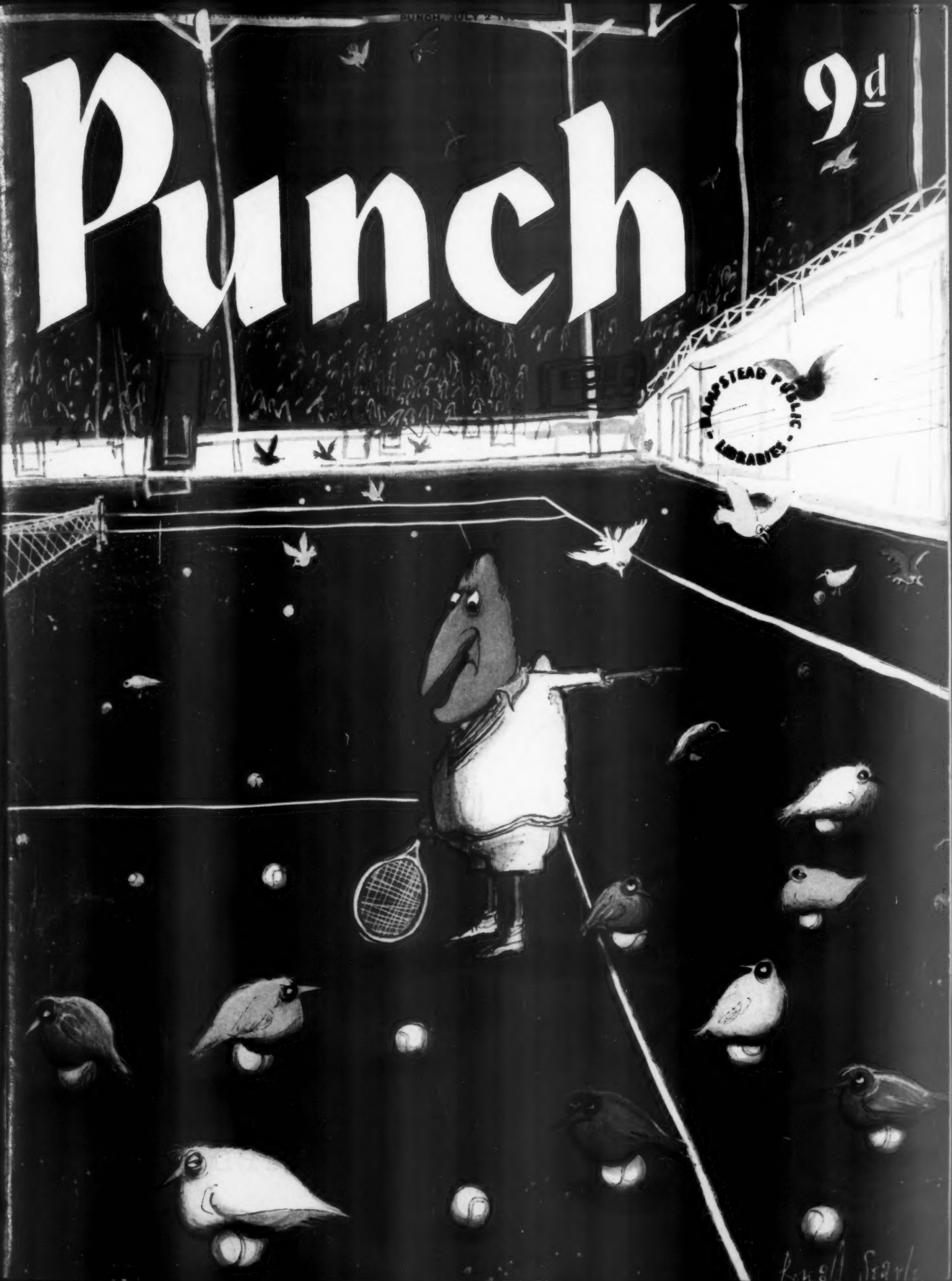


PUNCH JULY 2 1900

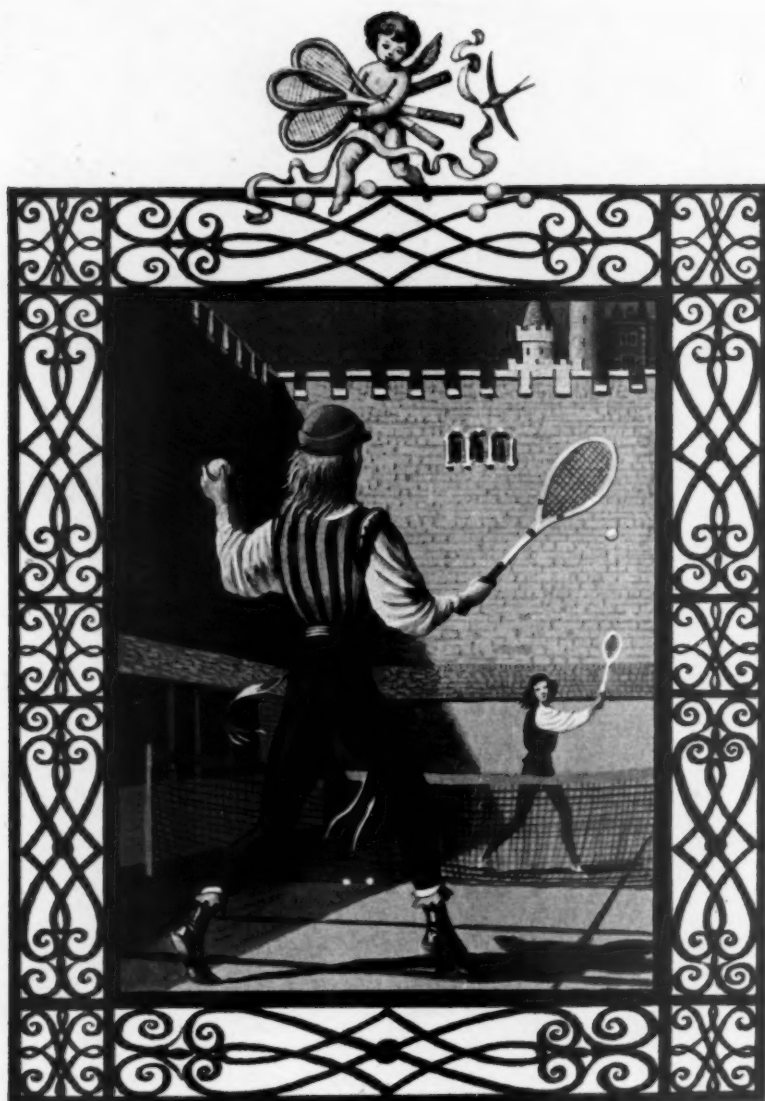
Punch

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Russell Searle



July

Like so many other things in this modern world, tennis isn't what it was and it would seem unlikely, therefore, that Bluff King Hal would approve of Wimbledon. It may, perhaps, console this much-married monarch to know that nowadays we call *his* game 'Royal Tennis' and some of us still play it. But, from the game which, literally, was the sport of kings in the 16th and 17th centuries, we have evolved our own version and Tennis has (in the current idiom) been democratised. Now, that is a Good Thing; and the same process can be seen at work in other directions. Banking—although never exactly a sport of kings—was certainly at one time a privilege of wealth. It is quite otherwise today, when thousands of people of all occupations and all walks of life regard it as normal and unexceptional that they should possess accounts at the Midland Bank. And that is a Very Good Thing Indeed.

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PUNCH

Vol. CCXXXV No. 6150 JULY 2 1958

ARTICLES

STEPHEN POTTER	
<i>Seven Ages of Humour: Do Try and Attend</i> ..	4
EVOE	
<i>Pleased to Meet You</i> ..	6
IAN PEEBLES	
<i>T' Lane Revisited</i> ..	7
E. S. TURNER	
<i>Let "u" Represent Hip Girth</i> ..	10
BERNARD HOLLOWOOD	
<i>What Manchester Drinks To-day</i> ..	11
SIRIOL HUGH-JONES	
<i>Wimbledon Way</i> ..	14
PATRICK CAMPBELL	
<i>West Briton in the Middle</i> ..	16
PETER DICKINSON	
<i>Wild Life at Eighty</i> ..	20
INEZ HOLDEN	
<i>Evening Out</i> ..	27

FICTION

H. F. ELLIS	
<i>A. J. Wentworth, B.A. (Retd.)</i> ..	30

VERSE

G. A. SHEPHERD	
<i>Love in the Stokehold</i> ..	9
ANDE	
<i>Game and Set</i> ..	15
R. P. LISTER	
<i>Pale Man on the Bakerloo</i> ..	29

FEATURES

PUNCH DIARY ..	2
LETTERS ..	8
ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT	
<i>Percy Somerset</i> ..	13
FOR WOMEN ..	18-19
IN THE CITY	
<i>Lombard Lane</i> ..	21
IN THE COUNTRY	
<i>Ronald Duncan</i> ..	21
TOBY COMPETITIONS..	26

CRITICISM

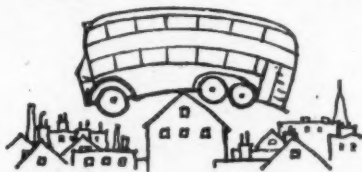
BOOKING OFFICE	
<i>Anthony Powell: Memoirs of a Younger Son</i> ..	22
THEATRE (Eric Keown) ..	23
FILMS (Richard Mallett) ..	24
RADIO (Henry Turton) ..	25

THE Misses O'Brien, Wright and Meakin had a special train put on for them at Chinley, Derbyshire, after missing a connection and finding the next wasn't for two hours. A railway official decided, said a report, that this "was too long for three pretty girls to wait." It takes three plain, middle-aged spinsters to stick a vigil like that.

"The Duke of Kent is developing a taste for fudge..."—*News Chronicle*
How about the readers?

OVER-PRODUCTION of milk this summer may not be the embarrassment it was last. Milk Marketing Board officials have noted with relief that a new juvenile sport is catching on—bombing motor-cars with cartons of milk from slot-machines.

THE HEADMASTER of Rugby struck a powerful blow for the prestige of the younger universities the other day, and severely condemned the attitude "Oxbridge or nothing." Given such a



lead, it is up to the institutions themselves to consolidate. What about a few goats, mail-vans and intimate receptacles scattered among the roofs and spires of Reading, Southampton, Manchester, Cardiff...?

ONE of the *Sunday Times* letters on the Decimal System complained that a previous correspondent had missed the point. Actually his point was that he never had.

CHARIVARIA

IDLE GOSSIPERS about shoddy British workmanship and the loss of our traditional skills were properly put in their place when a Scotland Yard man reported finding, at the scene of a robbery, "the finest set of pick lock keys I have ever seen."

BILLING for a church fête at Hayes, Middlesex, announces that the show will be opened "by the B.B.C. Television Weatherman." This should give

...now have much pleasure in declaring this umbrella open.



him a chance to prove that he's as good at starting these affairs as at stopping them.

TALK of the Russians taking Wimbledon by storm was suddenly hushed when a sports writer reported that Miss Anna Dimitrieva seemed to regard it "not as a fashion show but a place to play tennis."

"Scratch any serious City-bound gentleman waiting for the 8.15 train and what do you find?"—*Veronica Papworth*

What are you fined, surely?

Sunday Express readers coming across the headline, "I Watch a Rare Display by a Grouse," thought for a minute that it was some sort of profile of John Gordon.

To Chancellor, from Taxpayer
Now most of all we need to know
What difference it will make
If you should ease the credit squeeze,
But still keep on the brake.

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Punch Diary

JULY, perhaps because of the Dog Days, has a wonderful record of national feasts—Canada's Dominion Day, the United States' Independence Day, Northern Ireland's Orangeman's Day, France's Bastille Day, Colombia's Independence Day, Belgium's Independence Day and Peru's Independence Day for a start. It is very important for a new country to make sure that the shackles are struck off in a pleasant season. Founding Fathers who down the Oppressor in mid-January deserve the statues they get—except of course Antipodean Founding Fathers. When Australia celebrates on January 26th there can be alfresco fun and even fireworks. I should think that India was risking a bit by having a Day as late as August 15; but on the other hand India has another Day in January. Probably having several feasts is the best solution. Happy the nation that is liberated in stages!

Glory that was Grease

IT was obvious from reports of floods, jams, helicopter rescues and marauding jellyfish that the holidays were here. As a clincher there were even more widespread reports of oil; people struck it everywhere: on the beaches, down the prom, up the trousers, in the sandwiches. They carted five lorryloads away from Penzance. Mousehole was practically bunged up. "Darling, how black you are!" was the welcome to returned holidaymakers. Hove Corporation apologized in red-printed notices along the front. This resignation to oil is

something new. My chemist's counter has thrown up a fresh display of bottles; their labels frankly assume that the 1958 beachgoer will get glued up with black slime—and this is the stuff to remove it. Isn't it time the resorts started thinking? If science is powerless, what about propaganda? Brighton's Dr. Russell, had he been around, would soon have been sounding off in the public prints about the healthful and beautifying properties of a regular mouthful of old engine-oil. In the meantime the commercial chemists can hardly be blamed if they accept the evil and cash in on the cure.

Pity Mice Implicitly

"IN simple language," said the Prime Minister in reply to a request for a statement in simple language about what it meant to the people of Wales to have their water-supplies tested for strontium 90, "I am advised that the levels do not constitute any danger to the human population." That may seem like simple language to a politician, but I can't help feeling he might have done better. How, for example about this: "I am told that the levels are not dangerous to people living there"?

Coverage Spotty

I NEVER manage to find English papers regularly on a foreign holiday, and when I get home I surprise people by knowing quite obscure news stories



"For heaven's sake, sir, don't slam it!"

PUNCH, July 2 1958

and yet not having heard that a Minister has resigned. Years later I get caught by some item I missed during the hot, lazy days when the door of the village shop stayed locked or the bus had not brought the papers or it had brought them early and the shop had sold out. Occasional words caught and understood in foreign headlines give my information nothing but bulk; I generally come home knowing a good deal about bicycle races. They ought to hand you a summary of what has been going on as you come off the boat. Doesn't the British Council take any interest in the knowledge of Britain possessed by the British?

Child Falls Eighteen Inches

LUCKY children on a new housing estate have an architect-designed playground. I haven't seen it, but a photograph makes a prominent feature of what looks like a pair of outsize drainpipes debouching from an architect-designed mound of solidly-mortared bricks, with handrail. It would be unthinkable to condemn such a well-meaning idea so early—but how soon will the novelty of this wear off? For a time, no doubt, the simpler children will be content to shin through the drainpipes and clamber over the accident-proof brickwork; then it will dawn on them that it is not possible to get wedged in these particular pipes; that the brickwork is never going to collapse, bury them to the neck, and lead to interesting activity by police, firemen and Civil Defence personnel; and after that, if you ask me, they'll all be back on the bomb sites, where there's still a chance of a break in the monotony.

Hands Across the Sea

JAMES THURBER lunched at the *Punch* Table last week, the second American to do so. The first was Mark Twain, fifty-one years ago. Invited to cut his initials in the table, Mark Twain indicated the stylish "W.M.T." monogram incised there by Thackeray and modestly suggested that two-thirds of that would do for him. No one could find a monogram to provide a ready-made Thurber autograph, so he put his "Th" signature alongside that of Shirley Brooks. He also did a Thurber dog in the visitors' book. "I can feel Mark Twain looking over my shoulder right now," he said.



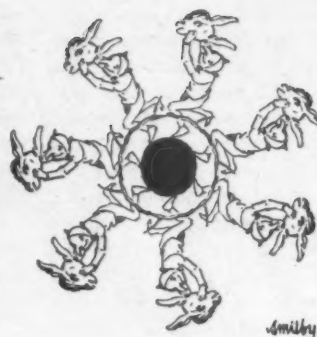
SUPPER WITH THE BORGIAS



Finally,
In the Fifties
STEPHEN POTTER says:

Seven Ages of Humour

DO TRY AND ATTEND



I THINK the precise age is important. I am of the 1900 class, and am therefore fifty-eight.

The age of exactly fifty has a lot to recommend it. The word "forty," by contrast, sounds like mud dropping on mud. It is the one year for which there is no praise, no kudos for seeming still remarkably young, no praise for being already wonderfully mature. "Fifty" sounds leaner, and has a grizzled briskness. There is a kind of sharpness about the word which is as stimulating as the first winter frost. "His eye was piercingly bright" sounds quite impressive for a fifty: for a forty it produces an "Oh, yeah" reaction. But as the fifties progress . . . perhaps it is that then they are already under the shadow of sixty, another low-spirited age.

My twenties were twice as happy as my teens, and to my surprise this geometrical progression went on till it became the turn of my fifties. Would it continue? Years ago I read in some school story that "Captain Branksborne, at the age of fifty, still had the athletic figure of a young lieutenant." I had long determined that I was going to out-Branksborne Branksborne, and though I was half aware of a two-inch thickening up round the lower rib at forty-five, I was so convinced that one day's diet and exercise would remove it that to me it didn't count, particularly as I was still fairly lean elsewhere (fallacy of the undistributed middle).

Then came the great moment, the fiftieth birthday. Aging was a myth. On this day, I thought when I woke up, I am going to do everything—enormous morning work, with a touch of gardening; business lunch necessitating pre-lunch drinks which yet is followed by a clear-headed business talk; a coolly critical glance in at Gimpel Fils, to see some strictly contemporary paintings;

evening squash rackets to be followed by a theatre and a late night at the Four Hundred. So I thought before I jumped out of bed; but I couldn't jump out of bed. My back was frozen solid by fibrositis.

Stiffening up is one of the kinder forms of decay, but it is a very constant reminder. Up till that moment I had always privately assumed that if I really put my mind to it I could not only take twelve strokes off my handicap, I could win the Golf Amateur as well: and that it indeed was only just this unfortunate business of the clash of dates which would make it impossible, when I really did get down to it as I intended, to win the Golf Open and Wimbledon in the same year. But now I was suffering from a complaint. No more valetudinarian fun with minor ailments. There was, in fact, some satisfaction about this—the feeling that one would be able, like the American hypochondriac, to write on one's tombstone "See, I *was* sick."

At fifty-eight age begins to seem like some ugly school uniform which you are never allowed to discard. There is a slight veil over the eyes and the ears, and the beginnings of a mask over the face, the lines of which become fixed. Change of expression is more difficult, and the tendency is that the permanent look will be severe and judicial—rather cross, in fact, in complete contradiction to one's normal feelings, which tend to be diffident and benign. Even if the hearing is perfect there is a mental wall between yourself and—(and *who* is this talking to me? . . . like Margaret's son . . . but that's what I used to say to Turner . . . he always won the argument . . . thought he did . . .). "I'm sorry, what did you say?" This is like the nuisance of seeming not to remember faces. It is not as simple as

that. You are introduced to James or Sarah and you immediately see in them between three and thirty precisely similar people whom you have met in the last forty years. In other words the memory slate of your mind is so crowded that you have to start writing (criss-cross and downwards) over the names already there, till the whole thing becomes illegible.

Years ago I used to make rules and collect tips for my behaviour in middle age; most of these were based on a young man's assumption that it was a good thing to remain young. But after a few false starts I have learnt that when this is the object it is no good being amazingly youthful and walking briskly about, because young men are never amazingly youthful and are totally incapable of walking briskly about.

My Young Self warned my Middle-aged Self to continue to keep up to the mark and read, and go and see, the new things. I am under the impression that I do, particularly just now, when the "Angry Young" authors and painters are in fact so humane, mature and humorously civilized. But I have to remind myself that I would not now enjoy a complete performance of *The Ring* more just because I was observing it from some crow's-nest at the back of the Covent Garden gallery, blissfully sniffing the fifty-times breathed air: nor would I cut dead somebody who said to me, of the modern equivalent of Wagner, that he "thought it was boring."

Thirty-five years ago I was left-wing, I believe, in pretty well every aspect of life, but of course particularly politics. I used to say to myself "Well, there's one mistake I'm not going to make in my life. I'm not going to get more and more right-wing as I get more and more middle-aged. Think of the horrible examples of Wordsworth and Ramsay

MacDonald." Well, here I am and where is my left-wing enthusiasm? Nil? And if so, is it because reforms I voted for have been accomplished? Certainly not. Is it because fifty has a vested interest in the preservation of the past, twenty the opposite? I think it is because left and right thinking belongs to twenty-hood and though scores of my respected friends have stuck in the left-wing right-wing groove, I believe that this has had a remarkably aging effect on them and that this shape of thinking has no real validity for their time of life.

What about the small rules and classical tips? I think one should be: Do try to attend. Do listen. Don't say to a young man "Tell me what you are doing" and then pour out a flood of reminiscences before he has opened his mouth. And do remember that for most of them the twenties are what the 1890s are to you—an array of remote, doll-like and charmingly attitudinizing eccentrics straight out of *The Boy Friend* or the *Fabian Frolics*. Then what about "Grapple them to your soul

with hoops of steel"? A hundred times No to that possessive old man's advice on what to do with friends. Never strain to keep ex-friends old friends. Unless the friendship has been kept by both sides "in a constant state of repair" (to use Dr. Johnson's wonderful phrase) you will be in a constant state of disappointment and miff.

Two other tips. One is to be prepared for the fact that nobody is going to pat

you on your fifty-eight-year-old back. No one is going to praise you for mowing the lawn, for having walked across the Pyrenees, or for getting a good review in *The Times Lit. Supp.*

Tip No. 2 is to point out that if any of these remarks have been even momentarily interesting to you it means that you yourself are young no more. To the youthful the subject of age is so boring as to be practically non-existent.

"WESTERN APPROACHES"

Next Wednesday PUNCH will contain the first of a series of articles on aspects of modern thought and behaviour. Contributors to this light but provocative series will be:

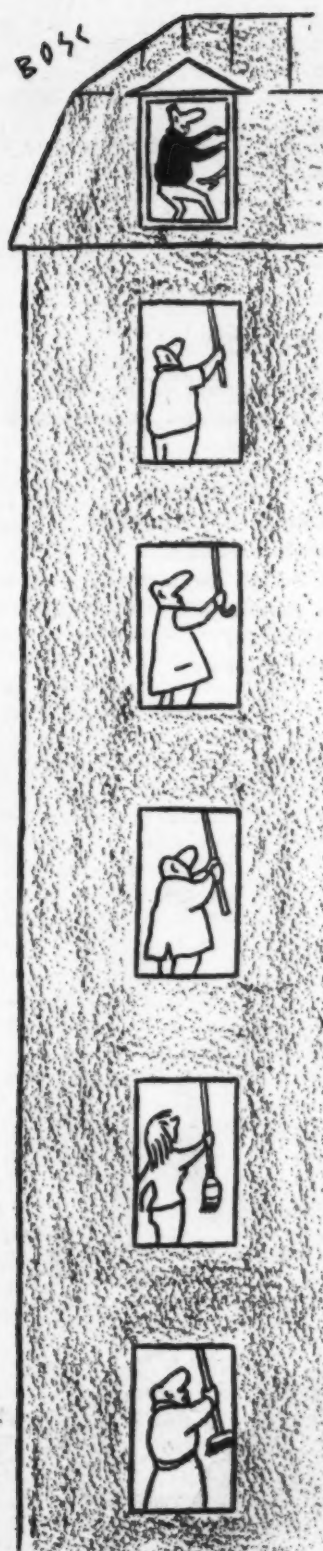
JOHN BERGER
MONICA FURLONG
ANTONY HOPKINS
D. F. KARAKA
C. S. LEWIS
WOLF MANKOWITZ
HUGH MASSINGHAM

DREW MIDDLETON
MAURICE RICHARDSON
GEORGE SCOTT
JAMES THURBER
R. C. ROBERTSON-GLASGOW
JOHN WAIN
REBECCA WEST



Pleased to Meet You By EVOE

Outside Inside Russia To-day



THANKS to so many bright-eyed travellers with their roving pens, the Iron Curtain has become as full of holes as a colander, and soon I think my ignorance of Russia will be complete. That of course is not the fault of the roving pens. It is merely that there are so many versts of letter-press, so many tundras of information, that I become confused. Sulky perhaps is a better word.

What more energetic teacher could I find, for instance, than Mr. John Gunther, who takes me by the hand like the Red Queen and hurries me still faster and faster from the central underground station in Moscow, which is made of white marble, to the tomb of Tamurlaine in Samarkand, which is made of black nephrite—whatever that may be? But where have we got to now? Was that Nijny-Novgorod or Kiev? It hardly matters, for Nijny-Novgorod is called Gorky now and at Kiev they toast your bread on one side only.

Inside Russia To-day, he calls his memorable book. But of course there is no Russia, and that indeed I knew before. It is just a mince-pie of Republics, some of them autonomous and some not, many of them with their own customs and languages and governments and balalaikas and boots, and of these the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic is the largest and longest and fuller of comrades than all the rest put together, and serve them right. All of them are entitled to secede from the central government at any moment, but they cling to the old firm, out of sentiment maybe. When a patriotic citizen of Udmurt cries aloud "Here and here did Udmurt help me, how can I help Udmurt—say?" he is using quite a different language from a citizen crying the same thing in Bashkir; but both of them have one eye on Moscow all the time.

Faced by these horrors the little student recoils; confronted by the fact that the poorest of these citizens, autonomous or otherwise, are very poor indeed, living about twenty in one room, but fond of jazz music, ice-cream and asking questions, while the richest are very rich, with incomes soaring like sputniks, and two or three country

houses apiece, he is filled with despair. Tell me about the leaders, he implores. History, as Mr. Bentley puts it, is about chaps. Mr. John Gunther has plenty to say about the leaders, especially about their personal appearance. And he seems to have met them all.

Bulganin, he tells us, is a suave number who looks like a Kentucky colonel. He is not a greeter. He organizes. He loves to drink. He drinks a lot. He has a lively sense of humour, which I guess he has to use. He has thick silver hair parted far on the left side, tawny eyebrows, a silver moustache and a small silver pointed goatee. Personally, I see him not so much as a Kentucky colonel but more in the Governor of North Carolina class. "It's a long time between drinks," would be his favourite line of oratory, and he would only organize in very small doses while the vodka dripped from his beard. His position has been gravely compromised, Mr. Gunther tells us, since the shake-up in June 1957, but he was still alive and still organizing—when I wrote this—between drinks. But maybe the intervals grow fewer.

Malenkov is "short and fat, with a face like a three-quarter moon under a flat cloud of black hair." Handsome, no doubt, if you care for that type. He walks in beauty like the night, with a Russian blouse buttoned to the neck, and is a passionate admirer of Robert Burns.

Malinovsky's proper title is Marshal Rhodion Yakovlovich Malinovsky, when you have time to say it. "He is a tough, squat, pug-nosed man of fifty-nine." He is a Hero of the Soviet Union, but nothing is said about the way he fastens his blouse.

Voroshilov is out. He is merely Chairman of the Praesidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. But he is out. And he drinks. In Russia one does not say "He has had one above the eight": one says "He has had his thirteenth." A spirited conversation between Bulganin and Voroshilov would be pleasant to record. Nevertheless Voroshilov is the man for my money. He once said to Stalin "If such a step is taken I would be ashamed to remain a member of our Party." Stalin became

black with rage, and collapsed on the floor. Beria, who was also present, danced round Stalin's prostrate form crying "Now we are finally free." This was an error of judgment. But Stalin never recovered from the shock.

Mr. John Gunther borrows this story from *France-Soir*, and it is supposed to be the real reason for the Doctors' Plot, when nine prominent physicians were arrested, and two were beaten to death. But that was in the bad old days...

Serov runs one branch of the police. The police in the U.S.S.R. are an extremely interesting body of men, or whatever you like to call them. In 1934

Stalin did away with the O.G.P.U. which became the N.K.V.D. (which afterwards became the M.V.D.). The N.K.V.D. had existed previously, but a part of it in 1941 became the N.K.G.B. Then the N.K.V.D. and the N.K.G.B. were reunited. Then they were set up again as separate entities. The N.K.V.D. was renamed the M.V.D. and worked side by side with M.G.B., which was the new name for the N.K.G.B. They were both combined again under Beria, but after Beria's downfall they were separated again, and, no other letters being found in the alphabet, the M.G.B. is now called the K.G.B., which practically explains everything.

Now Serov bosses the K.G.B. and Dudorov the M.V.D. At night I think they both dream of capital letters jumping through a gap.

This brings us to Khrushchev. Khrushchev is not nearly so homely as some of the pictures indicate, but he tries hard. "He has a silver fringe of hair, an upturned nose, three small chins"—a moderate allowance for any man—"and twinkling, very dark small eyes set widely apart and deep." He is "a round, roly-poly little man"—whereas other leaders are oblong and have arms and legs sticking out of them—and two of his teeth are gold.

The hands of course are red.

T'Lane Revisited

By IAN PEEBLES

THERE is a Test Match at Leeds this week, which is always quite an event. But for native Yorkshiremen it is probably a good deal less significant than their county's resounding defeat of the Champions by 248 runs a week or two ago. For this, in the midst of an otherwise desolate season, might well be the start of the long awaited reawakening of the giant. Appropriately enough the scene of this triumph and possible renaissance was Bramall Lane, Sheffield.

Appropriately, because as Canterbury is characteristic of Kent and the spirit of Surrey permeates the Oval, so Bramall Lane epitomizes the slumbering soul of Yorkshire cricket—plain, blunt, determined, full of character. It is not beautiful but, apart from the great grounds kept prominently in the public eye by frequent Test Matches, it is possibly the best known of English cricket grounds. Like other persons or objects of special affection it is seldom given its full title by its intimates. Jack Stephenson, of fast medium swerve and Essex fame, eager to make his maiden appearance thereon, instructed the taxi man to bear him to *Bramall Lane* and was admonished. "T'Lane's enoof," said the charioteer.

Aye, t'Lane. But it was its full title by which it was originally stamped upon my imagination and engraved in my memory. Long years ago Claude Taylor told me how, representing his native county of Leicester, he had just spent a day of murk and rain there,

punctuated only by inspections of the wicket. The tea-time one proved final, and the home captain made a reluctant signal to the few remaining spectators that all was over. At that a window in t'Lane itself was thrown up and a great voice, hoarse with frustration, swelled out. "Dost tha think," it cried, "that Ah pays rent to stay in Bramall Lane for *this*?"

This is not really the place to speculate on the tragedy lying behind that great *cri de cœur*, but it has haunted me ever since, and over the years a clear picture has crystallized in my mind. He was of course a night worker roused from his fitful daylight slumbers by his wife—"Zachary, Zachary, wake oop—captains are out agin." Red-eyed but hopeful, he leaps once more from his bed and, staggering to the window, is just in time to receive the final message of gloom. He throws up the sash and, such is human frailty, abuses the innocent bearer of ill tidings.

When the night worker uttered his cry of agony his district was, as now, one of plain, grim industry and smoke-begrimed brick and mortar. According to the illustrations of a very good booklet published for the centenary, three years past, however, the ground was originally laid out in what was almost open country. The adjoining road got its name from the Brammall family, who made files and gravers and lived in The White House at the corner. (In fact on early score-cards the spelling is frequently as of the family name.) Accord-

ing to the text and further illustrations the whole venture was successfully floated in 1854 on a billowing ocean of spade beards.

The next twenty years saw the pastoral character of the district much changed, and by the 'eighties and 'nineties the surrounding prosperity was evident in the smog above and about. It used to be said that the stokers had always a few extra shovelfuls in hand for the over-successful visiting batsman. Sometimes, if one may say so, these patriots misfired. As when, with



"I've been meaning to ring you for ages and this seems a good time..."

Yorkshire in the field, the safest catch in England was seen to station himself under a towering hit into the deep. His colleagues, as ever, regarded the striker's fate as surely sealed as though his middle stump lay flat on the ground, but were puzzled and dismayed to see the fielder hesitate, recover himself, falter and, finally abandoning all effort, allow the ball to fall heavily at his feet. At the end of the over his captain testily demanded an explanation. "You see yon black patch?" replied the culprit, indicating a wodge of smoke and fog directly over the pavilion, "Well, I sees her go oop and then she gits in black patch and I loses her. Then I sees her in t' sky, then she drops in black patch again, so I says bother and leaves her."

Commenting on this the other day a Sheffield lady said, rather primly, that Bramall Lane was going to be a smokeless zone, or at any rate the smoke was now no longer black, but yellow and very beautiful.

It is to be hoped that the colour scheme will in no way alter the character of the regulars who have for long been known for a fine mixture of feudalism, democracy, respect and outspokenness. Surely all these sterling qualities are perfectly illustrated in an old member's recollection of Lord Hawke serving a temporary and unusual spell in the deep. Some miscalculation led to the ball trickling through the nobleman's legs

and thence over the line, a catastrophe which must have resembled a procession flowing beneath an august monumental arch. For this lapse he was roundly castigated by a neighbouring spectator in terms both plain and blunt. His lordship heard this rebuke to its end with simple dignity, then turned his imperious eye on the speaker. "Quite right, my man," he said, before setting out for some more familiar part of the field.

The Lancites, though kind of heart, were never respecters of persons. When Charles Fry batted all day with Prince Ranjitsinhji he was periodically refreshed by a waiter with a glass on a silver tray. That his partner was on each occasion completely neglected struck one spectator (possibly irked by the repeated interruptions) as being grossly unfair. On the waiter's next appearance he voiced his protest. "Wot," he bawled, "naw chootney for Sambo?"

Bramall Lane has maintained its fame and character without the help of international events. There has been but one Test Match played there, in 1902, when Australia beat England by 143 runs. The collector's piece on that occasion was a pair made by Joe Darling, "c Braund b Barnes" in both instances. Perhaps, whatever they think in Leeds, the good partisan Bramall Lancite would rather not have foreigners playing on his sacred soil.



LETTERS

(Letters addressed to the Editor, unless specifically marked otherwise, may be considered for publication.)

To the Editor of *Punch*

SIR,—I feel drawn to support the opinion of Monsieur Paul Petit. The previous week a correspondent wondered "whether Ronald Searle fully realized how apt was his admirable cartoon." I agree that the cartoon was admirably done—it is really extremely amusing—but was it not perhaps a little unkind? Surely this *line* has been a little overdone. I do not consider it entirely apt to compare the gallant general, who needed enormous persuasion to enter the field at all, with the quixotic don, who was only too eager at all times to gallop off in all directions.

Yours truly,
Newcastle-upon-Tyne JOHN A. ORDE

JAM

To the Editor of *Punch*

SIR,—You may care to inform the President of the Anti-Destination Society of a very successful example of his Society's work with articulated vehicles; a lorry carrying a load of timber to Hull was parked at Amptill in such a way that traffic on the A418 road had to be diverted for twenty-six hours. Gratifyingly large crowds of pedestrians assembled to watch this achievement.

Yours faithfully,
Bletchley ETHEL WILSON

BOTTLENECKS

To the Editor of *Punch*

SIR,—R. P. Lister is not alone with his problem of bottlenecks. Although my entries have never been considered printable I find myself with three Toby Book Marks. Fine things, but as I seldom read more than one book at a time, what can be done with the surplus articles?

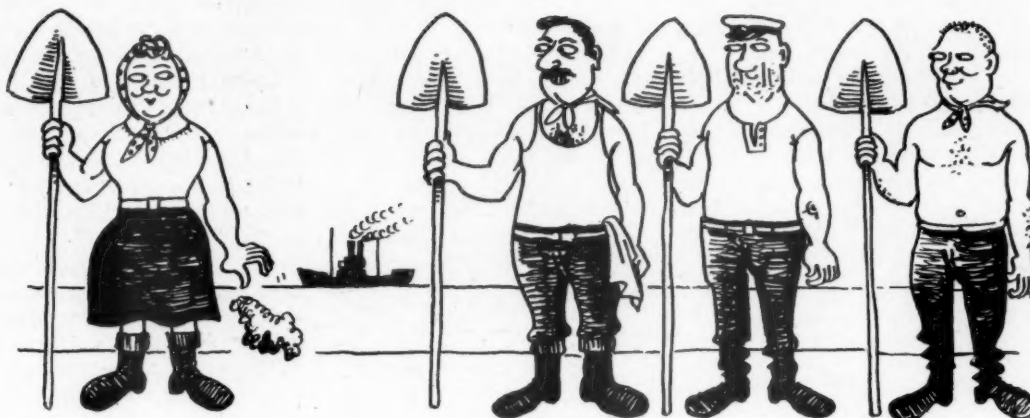
When worn in the lapel they give a slightly ostentatious air; finely shredded they produce a cool, refreshing smoke with just that tang of well-remembered days at the silo. That, however, may be as habit-forming as the weekly competition.

Yours faithfully,
Staunton-on-Wye MICHAEL BOOT

G. S. SHERWOOD

We record with regret the death of G. S. Sherwood, who contributed many drawings to *Punch* between 1930 and 1946.

Love in the Stokehold



FLYADORA VOSNOVITCH, stoker first class,
Aboard the old ship, coal ship *Glorious First of May*,

Was fatal to the targets and deadly to the norms,
When she stood there heaving (unlike Ulanova),
Forcing the coke into omnivorous fires.
Always in unison with party and partner—
Port de bras excellent—*adage* work delightful—
Her attitudes and arabesques should be seen to be believed.
Absolutely stunning thought her partners of the stokehold,
Fermentov, Rubitov, and Maxkoya,
Their *ballon* quite exceptional—the results of their training
In the Socialist, modernist, Leningrad school.

Oh, the cries and the sighs in the Black Sea doldrums:
Oh, Little Mother, how the temperature soared;
As did the passions of her three partners,
Stokers third class in *The Glorious First of May*,
While they fed the coke in Caucasian raptures,
Swinging their shovels like demented demons;
Lest the best shovel win the favours of Flyadora,
Stoker first class and holder of the all-important card.

How can I describe her elusive attraction,
Etched in cotton waste and obscured by steam?
Who could resist such Slav-like calmness
Or the placid indifference of her deep-set eyes?

So they came to harbour; and there they cleaned boilers,
And the fires in the ship were doused and cold,
While the fiery hearts of Fermentov, Rubitov and Maxkoya
Burnt to distraction in the dock-side bars.

Then the unconquerable, uranium-like Flyadora
Gave herself to them with the vigour of the party
In the park dedicated to Maxim Gorki, and used for rest,
Recreation and culture, near the plinth on which Stalin used
to stand.

The fires burnt low when their ship put to sea;
For poor Flyadora had the Order of Motherhood,
While Fermentov, Rubitov and Maxkoya were marching
To Siberia, charged with the awful, unforgivable crime
Of sabotaging Flyadora, stoker first class,
Of splendid elevation, exceptional party member,
Who exceeded all her norms on *The Glorious First of May*.



See her sitting knitting in the first mate's cabin
(The first mate's her mother), while the captain
(Not her father) keeps on ringing, ringing.
Oh, that endless ringing, and crying, always crying,
Little fathers, in the voicepipe,
And all he wants is steam.

G. A. SHEPHERD

Let "u" Represent Hip Girth

By E. S. TURNER

THE only reason why I took down this book from the shelf in the public library was that it appeared to have been consulted much more often than many of the books that surrounded it. After all, one likes to keep in touch with popular taste.

The book turned out to be a publication of Her Majesty's Stationery Office called *Women's Measurements and Sizes*. Its code number is 88-1204* and it bears the further reference (13076) Wt. P.25051 K12 3/57 C.P.Ltd. 304. Although it has been available to the public for several months it has not yet been reviewed (so far as I am aware) in any responsible quarter.

Let me say this at once: I think too highly of my fellow men to suppose the popularity of this book could have been influenced by the fact that it contains

numerous photographs of scantily dressed women; though candour compels me to report that these pages clearly have not escaped scrutiny.

I am quite willing to believe that this book was widely borrowed because there is a healthy and unrecognized public interest in anthropometry.

Anyone who has ever tried to measure a woman will know that the task is far from straightforward. There are scye widths to be computed, not to mention tibiale heights and abdomen-seat diameters.

This book, which is based on the measurements of 5,000 women, was not designed to help theatrical producers to measure the bitrochanteric width (hip width) of chorus girls but to assist the perplexed garment trade. It was, in fact, sponsored by the Joint Clothing

Council which, according to a foreword, went into liquidation even before the project was completed. With commendable public spirit, however, the Board of Trade decided to see the thing through.

In the list of credits are acknowledgments to the Government Social Survey, the Director of the Mathematical Laboratory at Cambridge (who lent the electronic computer EDSAC), a member of the Department of Applied Economics at the same university, and two ex-captains holding important, if mysterious, appointments in the clothing industry.

The serious tone of the work may be judged from the headings to its statistical tables: "Bivariate distribution in various girth measurements," "Regression coefficients for selected measurements in corset group," and "Multiple correlation coefficients between each measurement and various key items."

Before the field-workers could start gathering statistics they underwent a course, lasting between two and three weeks, on how to measure women. "There would have been some advantage," it is stated, "in employing university students with a training in anatomy, but as they were not usually available for indefinite periods of time it was decided to recruit women specially for the task." Those familiar with the works of Mr. Richard Gordon will feel that the decision not to employ medical students in a scientific survey like this was a wise one.

Among the lessons which had to be learned by the measuring staff was that tape measures give different readings according to whether the tape is run off the drum tangentially in the normal manner, tangentially but pulled backwards against the opening, or radially. They also had to consider "the effect of tension on girths."

The 5,000 women measured were mostly employed by big firms or co-opted by women's organizations. Measuring was conducted, very often, in conference rooms or directors' rooms; thus the word field-work is somewhat misleading. A few women, having volunteered to be measured, lost their nerve and did not turn up. Possibly



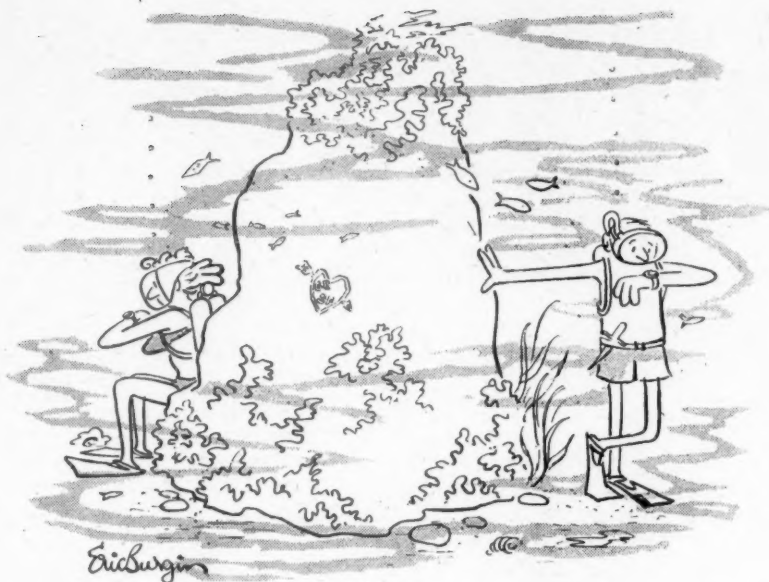
their husbands did not care for the idea of their disrobing in the directors' room. Possibly again they were shy of being photographed. If so, their fears were groundless, for the faces of all the women whose photographs appear in this book have been obscured by those blank rectangles which, in the popular press, are used to conceal the features of reprieved murderers and unmarried mothers.

Each measuring team had one portable weighing machine, two neck chains, one anthropometer, one protractor, three tape measures, three skin pencils and one small screwdriver (perhaps to adjust the anthropometer). The subjects' skins were freely pencilled (there is a whole section on "landmarks on the body") and, one by one, they bowed their heads in order that their cervicales might be located by palpation.

Although the compilers try to be as informative as possible (they even print a profile drawing of a woman and explain that it is a side view), the thoughtful reader may find that not all his questions are answered. He may be puzzled to learn that although the measuring teams were highly trained, it was found at the recording stage that some of the measurements obtained were anatomically impossible. Are they absolutely sure? How does EDSAC know a thing like that? Equally the reader may be baffled to know why a similar survey of women's measurements in America should have been carried out by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Without a doubt, the most challenging part of the book is the Mathematical Appendix. The writer says "Let 'u' represent hip girth and 'v' bust girth," and then rapidly works up to a series of formulae of which the one* at the foot of this column is as impressive as any (E. and O.E.). I am not sufficient of a mathematician, or an anthropometrist, to understand its full implications, but I have sent out for a second-hand copy of Hall and Knight's *Algebra* in order to brush up my knowledge. All I feel qualified to say at this stage is that it just shows what can happen when you start to measure women.

$$*f(u,v) = \frac{1}{\pi Su Svc K x(x-a)} \exp -\frac{1}{2} \left\{ \frac{1}{c^2} \left(\ln \frac{x-a}{b} \right)^2 + \frac{1}{k^2 x^2} (y-\bar{y})^2 \right\}$$



What Manchester Drinks To-day

By BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

IT is not generally realized, I think, that the London bus strike ended on the very day that the *British Medical Journal* printed an article on the dangers of driving under the influence of alcohol. For men on strike to read (the *B.M.J.* has a pretty good following among transport workers) that Manchester Corporation bus drivers had been plied with whisky in the interests of Science must have been distinctly sobering. Nobody said as much, but the theory that the article in question was "planted" by an unhappy Ministry of Labour and an embarrassed Mr. Cousins cannot obviously be entirely ruled out.

What happened in Manchester was that hand-picked drivers were given varying amounts of whisky and then ordered to drive their vehicles through gaps of varying widths. The results were interesting: the drivers, to a man, became more optimistic about getting through as their intake of alcohol increased, and all of them, with each additional nip, became less efficient in the art of steering.

"The menace to public safety,"

reported the Manchester psychologists responsible for the experiment or binge, "comes particularly from those who, after a slight amount of alcohol, feel they are sober, or believe they are driving more cautiously." Well, I don't know. I do most of my driving in the country, along narrow, winding, leafy lanes, and my experience is that I am distinctly less accident-prone with a gin under my belt than without. It is not, I am sure, that I drive better or more cautiously, but that possible distractions—cows, cars, carts, hedges, ditches and trees—seem to get out of my way much more smartly. Some form of thought transference, perhaps. It is most peculiar. When I am ginned up (a convenient vulgarism to describe the ingestion of one, perhaps two, minute 32-out gins) cows actually bustle to avoid me, cars pull in and remain on the grass verge until I have passed them, trees secrete some kind of phosphorescent paint and glide by like ghosts. And any human beings who happen to be in sight always seem to be climbing gates, jumping ditches or diving into bracken.

I raise this matter not to boast of my prowess as a driver or drinker but because I wish to suggest further lines of research and experiment to

Manchester University's Department of Psychology. Some men think they drive better after alcohol, others think they speak better, play better, eat better, conduct business better. And it would be valuable to know whether a blood alcohol level of 0.5 mg. per millimetre—a level considered okay by the United States National Safety Council—impairs a man's judgment as an after-dinner speaker, a lover, a gourmet or a tycoon.

I should like to read in the *B.M.J.* that business-men in varying stages of intoxication had been invited to drive bargains of varying hardness . . .

"After one double whisky (plus one potato crisp) Lord Fudge made a careless take-over bid on the strength of a 1953 balance sheet and a rumour of phylloxera in Outer Mongolia.

"After two double gins Mr. A. Harcourt Thomlinson was ready to arrange a suicidal merger with the Acme Acne Lotion Co.

"After three doubles and one single vodka Viscount Schraff admitted that nationalization was 'probably the only way out for the ground glass industry'."

It would be useful too to learn that

"Mr. Partons, after one glass of hock, introduced a disastrous note of whimsy into his speech to the Ixtholme Oddfellows.

"After four burgundies Captain Jackers mentioned a lady of Gloucester, and was only rescued from utter ignominy by his inability to remember the last line.

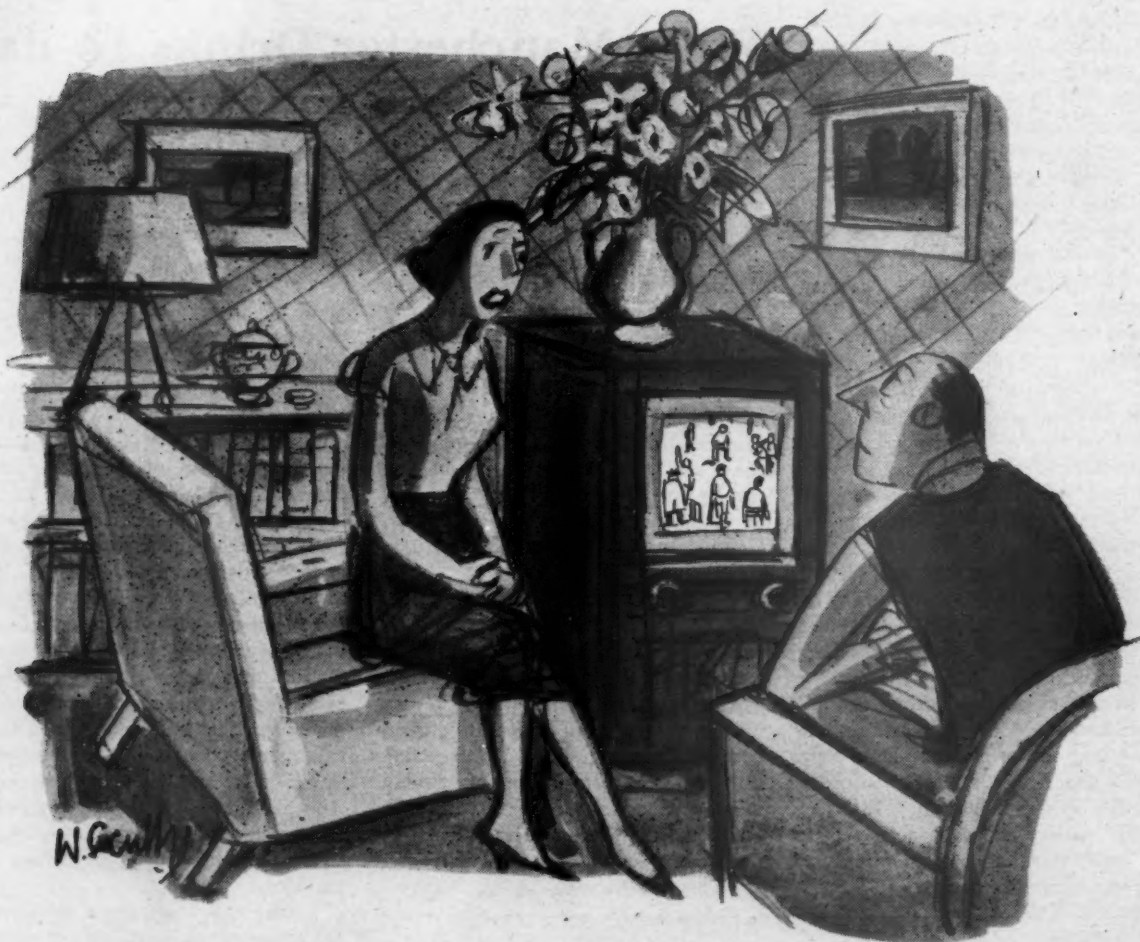
"After a bottle of Château Yquem Lord Sinters was foolhardy enough to embark on a story involving an Englishman, an Irishman and a Scotsman."

If a blood alcohol level of 0.5 mg. per millimetre is considered safe for motorists is it also considered safe for interviewers, performers on "Panorama," Chancellors on Budget Day, Test Match umpires and so on? We ought to know.

And, come to think of it, what level is considered safe for writers of light articles? We ought to be told. I ought to be told.

"It emerged that there was some ambiguity as to the meaning of our phrase 'To make conscious the shape of the process of which we are a part . . .'. It has been asked 'Do we mean "to make the shape conscious"?' and we have replied: 'No, we mean "to make conscious within ourselves the shape of the process . . . etc."'"—
From the Report of the Sensory Committee of the School of Integrative Social Research at Braziers Park, Ipsden, Oxon.

Yes?



"You've managed to get smoking and drinking taped. Why don't you come to terms with this?"

Essence of



Parliament

FOR the most part the usual sort of things that happen almost any week: Brigadier Clarke's car was towed away by the police again, and that trinity of happy aesthetes, Sir Hamilton Kerr, Mr. Kenneth Robinson and Mr. Anthony Greenwood, tried to find out what was going to happen to the building next to the National Gallery and, as usual, got little change and much pomposity out of Mr. Molson. The Williams-Willey boys were hunting of the Hare for his alleged backing of the landlords, and Russian fishermen were hunting of an Estonian, whom Mr. Shinwell thought to be anxious to join the Liberal Party, up in the Shetlands. But Cyprus again was what mattered.

The defenders of Parliament say what a wonderful thing it is to have a forum where the great issues of the day can be fearlessly debated. Its critics say that that is just what, in recent times at any rate, does not happen. There are, they say, grave industrial crises at home. In the Middle East and elsewhere the world totters on the verge of total catastrophe, and whenever there is a debate on any important issue Government and Opposition spokesmen combine to regret that anything should be said at this critical stage of negotiations and devote three days of their valuable time to a debate on the reduction of purchase tax on trouser buttons. Now to some extent it is true that the futility of debate is due to the fact that neither party is any longer really a party—that both have so many divisions within themselves that they prefer not to have their record on any serious issue investigated by opponents. Partly it is the fault of the procedure. Mr. Butler holds out hope that something may be done about procedure because there is a committee

sitting to decide what should be done. It seems a curious reason for belief in action, but let us hope that he is right. But are Parliamentary debates always dull merely because M.P.s are dull? Is it not possible that Mr. Macleod was right in wishing that the bus strike should not be debated when the bus strike was on?—that the Opposition was right to pull its punches about Cyprus? Is it not possible that issues are now so complicated, so inevitably settled at levels far above those of the heads of the ordinary M.P. that there is really not any longer any serious purpose for Parliament to perform? It is an awful thought—or is it?

As for Cyprus, Mr. Lennox-Boyd told us what was in the Plan, which we all knew already. We do not say that there was anything else that he could have done. Mr. Callaghan added the suggestion that there should be in addition to the Greek and Turkish Assemblies a general over-all inter-communal Assembly—a constructive suggestion in itself, but is there any chance in the present atmosphere of its being adopted? The Government of Ireland Act spoke of an All-Ireland

Council, but it never came into existence. He meditated, as he was entitled to meditate, on the degree of responsibility of the Conservative Government for the present troubles, and somebody on the Conservative benches might equally have meditated, if meditating were a Conservative thing, on the degree of responsibility of the Socialist Government which came before it. Mr. John Peel proved himself a robust maiden, and Mr. Francis Noel-Baker asked some

questions about how the plan was going to work. The questions were pertinent enough, but it is much easier to ask questions about Cyprus plans than to suggest an alternative. There was a curious echo of old Irish quarrels about the debate. Many of the problems, many of the causes of reservation, are much the same. But how different was

the Parliamentary atmosphere! Sir Winston Churchill, that veteran whose memories go back to a time before the beginning of the Committee stage of the Finance Bill, sat quizzically listening, recalling perhaps those very different days when Ulster Members threw books at him.

Mr. Paget condemned the plan as "a non-starter,"

but every other speaker was at least willing to give it a try, and it was in this spirit that Mr. Bevan and the Prime Minister made their winding-up speeches. As we know, there are no two Members who are better at a bit of knockabout at the finish than these two statesmen, and no one suggests that it was other than to their credit that they spoke with great restraint. But there it was. The bubbles were out of the champagne. Mr. Bevan, the artist, is most at home when he is making a rollicking, denunciatory speech, and it would doubtless have suited the artist in him to have ripped into the whole Government record; but the statesman was allowed to conquer the artist, and the Prime Minister did not think that this was an occasion to spoil the unanimity of the House by attempting to answer detailed criticisms. The result was that the fun and the games were left to two Empire Loyalists in the gallery, who shouted random observations about "Treason," and at ten o'clock the House adjourned without a division.

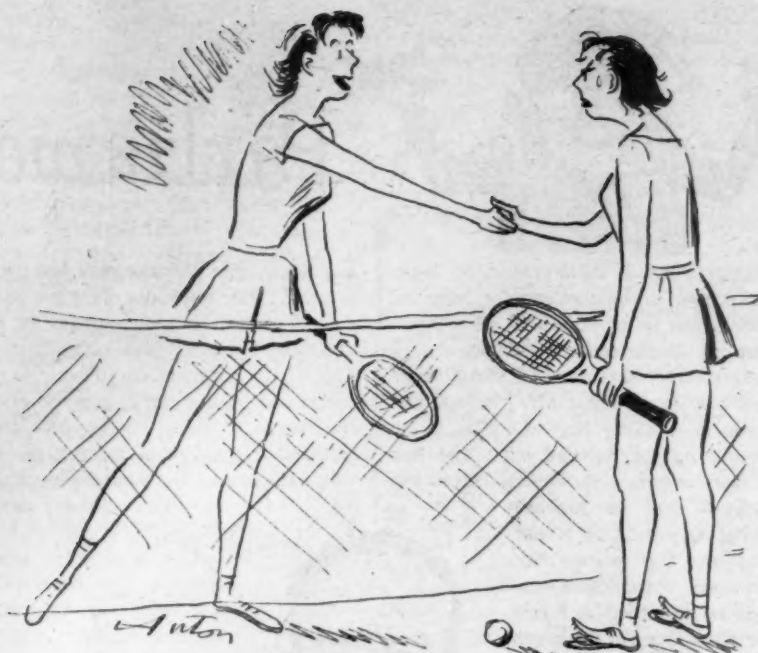
PERCY SOMERSET



Mr. John Hare



Mr. F. T. Willey



"Sorry if I kept you scampering about a bit."

Wimbledon Way

By SIRIOL HUGH-JONES

LIKE many another of life's little uncertainties, such as women and love, Wimbledon is not at all like what you see in the movies. I suppose everyone else knew this already, but I still find the world full of surprises; and had been content, until now, to observe star-quality amateur tennis in brief, climactic flashes on the big screen.

I was once made mildly aware of the way tennis can go on and on and on by taking tea with Peter Ustinov, while Wimbledon was pinging away on the box in the corner. Every now and then the telepathic knowledge of some howitzer passing-shot about to come up would rivet my host's keen eye to the screen and he would vanish into another sphere of consciousness, the world forgetting by the world forgot; but I don't remember paying it much heed. You take tea with tennis-players, you run that kind of risk.

Wimbledon, in my mind, was always a way of life, a philosophy, rather than a place; or, if you must pin it down, it was all velvet grass and bronzed madcap

heroes in tiny little shorts. I never gave much thought to where they put the spectators, though I knew they must be around somewhere. Women buy new hats to wear to Wimbledon, and *Vogue* keeps begging and beseeching you to remember that it's tennis and day-time and a spectator sport and to wear a simple linen suit and a tiny hat and leave well alone.

Eager to view the stylish throng, all linen-suited and quietly, impeccably poised as I had planned them, I beat my way, early and under a black sky, on to the Tea-lawn. There the fortunate spectators were building up for the test of strength to come, moodily munching beef hamburgers (queue up and they pass you one through the hatch) washed down by fruitades and topped up with strawberries-and-cream at two-and-nine a go. Fashion ranged from plastic pixie-hoods to plastic cover-alls to open-toe courts to brogues to sensible tweed suits worn with a straw hat (to show it's summer) to one gallant young woman in green-and-white striped

trapeze, vamp-bandeau, bare arms, little chilly nose, all, all green-and-white as a lily or Ophelia in the weeds.

Five minutes on the Tea-lawn gave me the weird sensation that the place was packed with twins. Popular belief maintains that women will go to any length to avoid being caught in identical clothes, but this is not so. Out for a jolly afternoon together, they must ring each other up and adopt the same protective colouring beforehand. There were two identical black cocktail veils with chenille bobbles munching away together, two grey suits with feather helmets. In the serried ranks of uniformed schoolgirls, massing all over the place, it's possible to see the same women fifty times over, a terrible moment of fear and nostalgia.

Everybody eats at Wimbledon. From tempting little open stalls you can scoop yourself unlimited quantities of goodies on the do-it-yourself principle, and one and all stock up like mad with Cough Candy and Glycerine-and-Orange and Luxury Assortment before the tussle begins. Jaws champing, eyes popping, umbrellas at the ready, everyone then rushes from place to place to make sure they're not missing something better somewhere else.

For of course the absolute hell of Wimbledon is that there are thirteen games going on at once. I became frantically aware of this from the moment a solemn posse of men unveiled the holy grass of the Centre Court from its ground-sheets, trod the gale out of them like swimmers breasting a ninth wave, the photographers knelt together in a devout row, the Duchess of Kent settled comfortably into her top-coat, and M. G. Davies and J. Brichant (both with lovely brown legs and tiny little white shorts) loped nimbly from the gladiators' pits and prepared to attack each other. Even at the very instant when you are inching out of Standing Room on all-fours something crucial is happening on Court 2, where M. J. Anderson and A. Gimeno, with even browner legs, are slithering elegantly about on the sopping grass in a pantherine manner and the ball-boys from the William Baker Technical School are skidding, bent double, along the net with the desperate skill of commandos under enemy fire.

Everybody is dead keen. You'd think sometimes that all anyone cared about

was who was wearing cross-stitch slogans on their underwear. Not at all. Tennis is no smiling matter, whatever those frivolous fellows Drobny and Borotra may get up to. You flex your fingers and wiggle your shoulder muscles and do knee-bends and chop up little bits of grass with your racket, and sometimes you take your racket in both hands and talk to it softly and solemnly in a menacing manner, telling it to do better next time. You hit the ball, not your opponent, but sometimes it's a pretty near thing.

The schoolgirls are dead keen too. They cram their straw hats over their noses against the rain and munch and lean forward, sending out fierce silent messages willing the fellows in the small white shorts to slice the skin off the other chap's nose, and silently they press six deep round the photograph-stall, ordering three-Andersens-three-Brichants-three-Ashley-Coopers-please, and stagger feverishly away with glossy prints of smashing calves and radiant biceps. Even on some remote deserted court that no one seemed to care for, where two dark gentlemen were doggedly, endlessly, playing this sad, relentless game, three schoolgirls in green

and four in navy blue were faithfully munching and willing right to the end.

By tea-time I was beginning to twitch and mutter and rush even more from place to place. Tiptoeing past a venerable sage on the end of the row who kept letting out strangled cries of "Ah, beautiful!" to the grim ones nippily whanging away with volleys and smashes and zinging drives, I crept away through the jam-packed people in plastic bags, their nerves torn to shreds by haste and indecision, and the Luxury Assortment papers whistling head-high down the wind. There's a booklet you can buy called "Meet the Stars," and at the back it gives some pretty grim Advice From 24 Wimbledon Champions. "Alice Marble: 'I aim to run my opponent off her feet in the first five games...' Jack Kramer: 'Fear can defeat you in any game...' Jean Borotra: 'Fight to the end...' Vic Seixas: '... It is no good suddenly going to bed early on the night before a final...' Angela Buxton: '... personal discipline, perseverance, subordination of other interests, sacrifice...' And Dorothy Round, the dear old-fashioned thing, says "Remember, it is only a game."

Well—maybe, maybe. At least there was no need to purchase a paper sun-hat from the attendants of the British Cushion Company. And the rain was doing the hydrangeas all the good in the world.

Game and Set

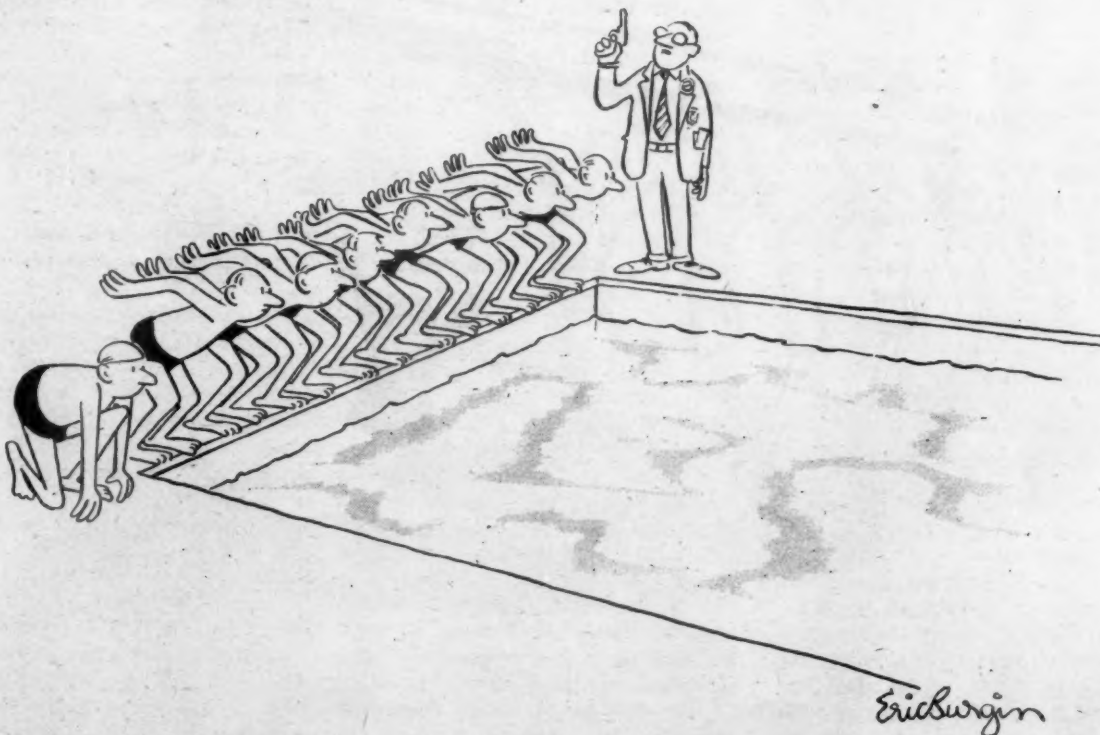
I SPEAK as one who shrinks
From tennis as a sport,
For whom the whole thing stinks—
The feuds, the Centre Court,

The shamateurs, the scenes,
The who turns pro or not,
The gimmicks, glamour queens,
Headlines, romance, the lot.

I also speak for those
Who watch TV a bit,
But never watch it much,
Never waste time on it.

In fact I represent,
I'd say, a goodish few
Sitting, in rapt content
And mess, the Fortnight through.

ANDE



West Briton in the Middle

By PATRICK CAMPBELL

Episode in Connemara

"IT'S magical, quite magical, Jeremy, isn't it?" Pam breathed, genuinely enchanted.

The long, narrow road was very white against the sage and chocolate bog. The mountains of Connemara were obligingly performing their electric-sign trick of changing rapidly from green to blue to purple as the soft grey clouds slid across them, hurrying in from the Atlantic and the setting sun.

"Absolutely like magic," Jeremy agreed. "Like a sort of—fairyland."

It's got him too, I thought, in spite of his Sandhurst moustache and his sheepskin overcoat.

"And so amazingly empty," Pam said. "Like a sort of green, fairy desert. I feel no one lives here—except the leprechauns."

I was prepared to overlook it. She was a Lowndes Square girl, with big

eyes and a prettily chiselled Melton Mowbray nose. I regretted the presence of Jeremy in this otherwise deserted fairyland. Philosophically I switched from one pleasure to another.

"I could do with a drink," I said. "It brings up the magic like anything."

"Drink?" said Pam. She made it sound like a dirty word. "Surely there aren't any pubs round here. We haven't even seen any houses."

Jeremy looked relieved. After the Hunt ball the night before we'd finished up in a hedge drinking Paddy Flaherty out of a plastic picnic cup. He'd had a pale, shaky day.

"We'll find something," I said, knowing we couldn't fail.

Two miles farther on I turned into the forecourt of Delahunty's Select Lounge and Bar—a whitewashed cottage with a slate roof and a lot of tin

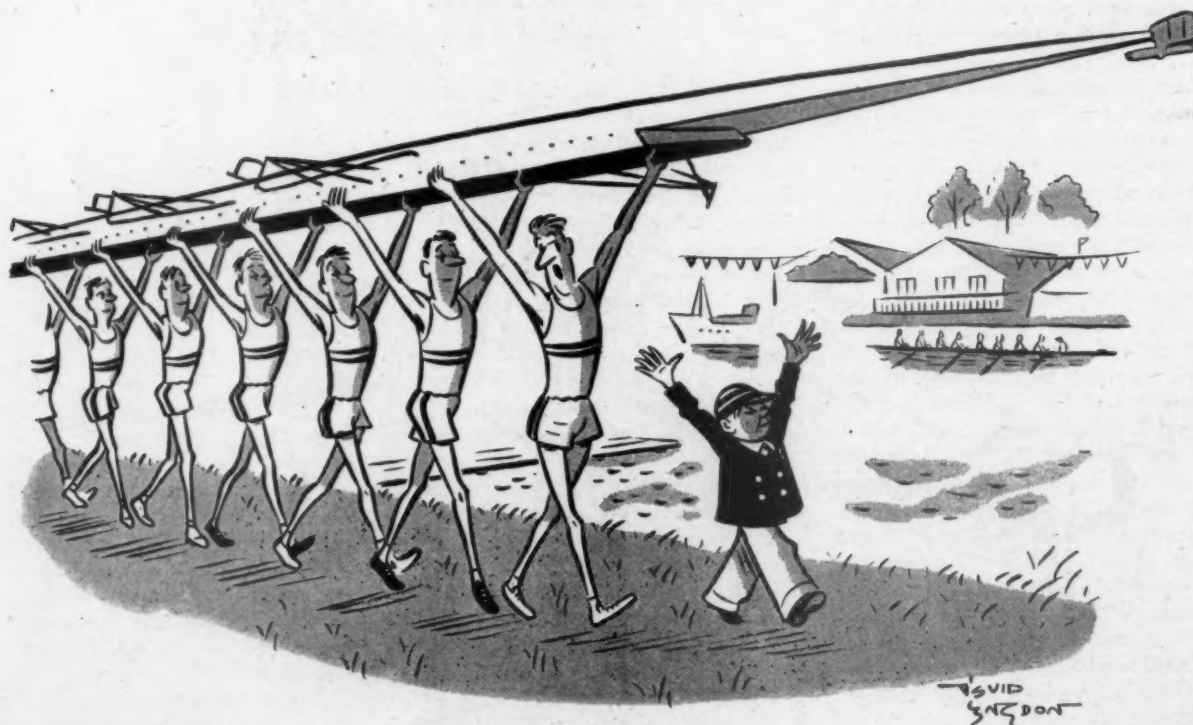
signs nailed to the front of it advertising, in peeling primary colours, cut-plug tobaccos and forgotten patent medicines. There were several cars in the forecourt, the usual selection, but none that I could immediately identify. We might be all right. The magic might be left undisturbed.

The first person I saw in the Select Lounge was Mrs. Hannigan, whom I'd last met at Leopardstown races the previous afternoon, one hundred and sixty miles away.

"God," said Mrs. Hannigan, "is there no peace?" She was thirty-five, already getting heavy, but dressed in the height of Dublin fashion.

Automatically, I looked round and saw Charlie Boylan at the bar. She intercepted my glance. "All right, nosy," she said. "I'm in me own car."

Pam and Jeremy were still standing



"What I like about him, he always shows willing."

in the doorway. They looked lost. The transition from fairyland to the crowded metropolitan conditions of the Select Lounge had been too much for them. Mrs. Hannigan ran a swift eye over Pam's Bruton-Street tweeds. "I hope it keeps fine for you," she told me.

I removed Pam and Jeremy without introduction, and shoved them through the farmers, horse-copers and commercial travellers to the bar. The Select Lounge was dimly lit by paraffin lamps. There was a lot of stout on the floor.

Pam said she'd have a gin and tonic. "I don't know," Jeremy said. He was looking really bad. "Half of bitter, I suppose."

Several youths with quiffs of black hair sticking out from under the peaks of their caps were looking at his sheepskin overcoat and trying ostentatiously to restrain their laughter. "Hawf of bittah, Majah?" one of them said, convulsing the others.

"Sure, we don't have bitter here," I told Jeremy. "Make it a ball of malt." I'd rather overdone my Irish accent.

The drinks came in thick, greasy glasses, surprisingly heavy, like stones.

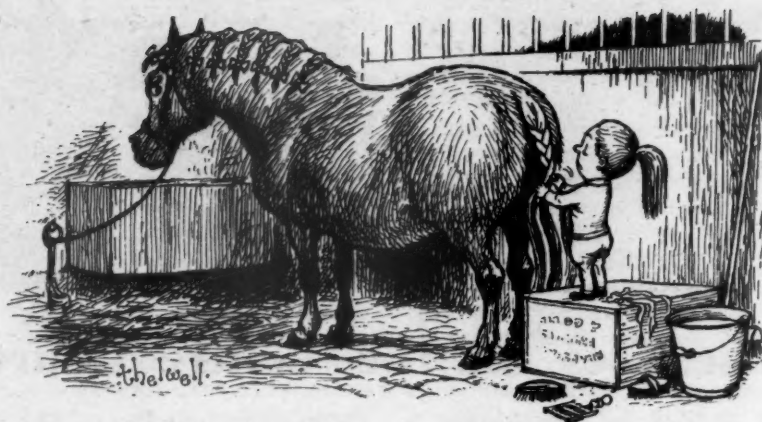
Pam sipped at hers. It was two-thirds Cork gin. "But where has everyone come from?" she asked faintly. "I mean, I thought we were literally miles from anywhere."

I tried to keep my voice down, while preserving the magical atmosphere of our earlier conversation. The youths were still listening. "It's an extraordinary thing about Ireland," I said, "but you keep on meeting everyone you know in the most unlikely places—"

"An' what d'you know about it, you dirty West Briton?" The voice was familiar. So was its blend of humour, diffidence and defiance. I turned and it was the Poet O'Riley, in the thick green tweeds woven of some vegetable substance, and a brown ring of stout round his mouth complementing the glass he held in his hand. "Are you back or what?" he said, squaring up to me. "Don't tell me they found you out at last?"

"Hello, Poet," I said. "Meet some decent people. This is Pam and Jeremy Holme-Beresford." I wished their names had a more indigenous ring.

The Poet gave them a furtive little measuring look. He bowed awkwardly, slopping some stout over Jeremy's



suède shoes. "Welcome," he said, "to the island of sadness, sausages and scholars. Sure, the whole country's bankrupt. That's a great coat you have on you," he said to Jeremy, looking at the sheepskin. "Are you buyin'?"

Jeremy looked at him open-mouthed. He hadn't understood a word. The Poet turned to me. "You must be loaded yourself," he said, "an' you prostitutin' yourself to the Yellow Press the other side. Ball of malt, Jack," he said to the barman in the same breath, and continued instantly—"Talk about the Relief of Mafeking! Yez couldn't have arrived at a better time. I'm caught up with a gang of commercials from Ballinasloe. A desperate lot. You'd get better talk out of a dog. If you're goin' on to Galway I'll join you for the ride."

"I'm afraid not, Poet," I said. "We're only going as far as Oughterard."

"I get it." The jesting manner had vanished, without a trace. "Don't tell me. I'm not good enough. I know you—you an' your English friends. All right, then—get back where you belong!"

"And good riddance too," said Mrs. Hannigan, joining the circle at a moment for which she'd probably been waiting.

"And what's the matter with you, Josie Hannigan?" said the Poet, instantly coming to my defence. Out of the corner of my eye I saw Pam reach out for Jeremy's hand. "Have you no home of your own?" he asked her venomously. "Or is poor old spavined Charlie Boylan still takin' the weight?"

"He's fit to buy a drink," snapped

Mrs. Hannigan, "which is a damn sight more than you ever did."

"In that case," said the Poet, with a smile for the speed of his own manoeuvring, "I'll take a ball of malt."

"You will in your eye," said Mrs. Hannigan buoyantly.

I found Jeremy plucking at my sleeve. "I'd rather like to get on, old chap, if you don't mind," he said in a low voice. "Pam's rather tired."

"All right," I said. "The little bit out of the Bon Ton cosmetic counter in Grafton Street sends Charlie his love," I told Mrs. Hannigan. "Give him the bend." Then I followed Pam and Jeremy outside.

We drove away from Delahunty's Select Lounge and Bar in a silence that persisted for some time. The sun was sinking into the open Atlantic in thousand-mile layers of red and gold. The slopes of the hills were already turning to a soft, velvety black. If there had been any leprechauns in the neighbourhood they'd have been out all over the place, hoofing it round their fairy rings. Not that the Holme-Beresfords would have noticed.

"It's not too far to Roger's, I hope," said Jeremy, in a constrained, conversational voice. "I could certainly do with a glass of sherry."

"No," I said, "it's not too far."

"I'm simply dying for a hot bath," said Pam, pure Lowndes Square. "I must look an absolute fright."

I drove, not too fast, down the long, white, darkening road. It was obviously going to be a big night in Delahunty's. And from what I knew of Roger's house-parties you'd get better talk out of a dog.

FOR
WOMEN



Chemises on the Centre Court

L'AMOUR fait passer le temps; le temps fait passer l'amour, reads the gold lettering on the handbag of Miss Fageros. Surrounded by schoolgirls, for whom she is executing autographs with the accomplished strokes which come from constant practice, it seems certain that however she passes the time, time will not pass her by. The pale, wide, innocent eyes, the helpless voice with its hint of a break, are in artistic contrast to the over-all impression she gives of knowing her way about, which is supported by the information that she has sold, when the market was at its highest, two pairs of her gold lamé cast-offs.

Her gold assets are still considerable: golden hair, golden tan, golden tennis rackets embroidered on the frieze around the chemise and on the shorts beneath. The chemise dress is Teddy Tinling's top seed this Wimbledon. It is a basically workmanlike short shift: plain neck, loose fitting bodice, inverted pleat at each side. The under-shorts are Terylene satin, not for glamour but so that the chemise does not cling or ride up. But the frieze, five inches below the natural waist, is a canvas for the ego expressionists: palm trees and bananas for Miss Bueno; stars and stripes for Mrs. Knode; thirteen yellow cats for Miss Bloomer (because she loves cats and thirteen is her lucky number); embroidered heather for Mrs. Segal (because her name is Heather), and for Mrs. Hawton a frieze of Mary, Mary, Mary. Even the hardest hitters, it seems, are sweeties with soft centres; even Christine Truman has eight little tennis-ball buttons on her dress.

The next Tinling favourite is his 1958 Suzanne, an exact replica, except in

length, of the dress Lenglen wore in 1926: loose-fitting bodice, pleated skirt from a low waist. This is interesting because the chemise dress, without intention, is an exact replica of the games tunic introduced at Roedean in 1928 to replace the trapeze-line djibbabs—in this case even the length being the same, for the games tunic revealed the full length of thigh-long woollen stockings. Some of the 1958 Suzannes have coloured borders which give a pretty movement as they swirl in the service. Miss Reynolds of South Africa has a blue border; Miss Reyes and Miss Ramirez have green and red for Mexico. When this merry little pair won the ladies' doubles in France it was said "Last year they came and captivated, this year they came and conquered."

The third most popular Tinling is a princess line dress with a deep ribbon V at front and back. It was chosen by twenty different players, and worn to kill by Miss Lazzarino of Italy. She has the biggest eyes in Europe, with long-fringed lids which she lets up and down like Venetian blinds. The puff-ball

dress, worn first by Mrs. Weiss, was this year's exclamation piece; but criticism must be reserved until it has flowered upon Miss Bloomer, as is promised. Few of the leading players wear shorts, except Miss Gibson who has introduced a new long-short look. Hers are Bermudas, worn with a very long button-front singlet. With her beautiful fluid movements she prowls

Owing to misinformation we implied two weeks ago that Mrs. Gaby Schreiber had redesigned the interior of Shell-Mex House. In fact she advised on the colours and furnishings of a part of the company's London offices.

the court like a panther. Little Miss Bouchet has near-white lips and eyelids, as is the Left Bank make-up now, and wears her hair in two short pigtales. Her dress is just like a man's shirt. With sleeves rolled to the elbow, and very tightly belted, it finishes breath-takingly too soon. Waif-like eyes, sallowness, dark hair sometimes worn loose and hanging over the eyes, she could be a girl in a French film. For all her youth, hers is sultry, indoor weather.

Thus it can be seen that the light and shade of Wimbledon does not entirely depend upon climatic conditions: there is the weather on and off the courts, in the dressing-rooms, and in the Players' Tea Room. It can be sunny and calm, or torpid and close, light-hearted or doom-laden. But the prevailing weather does not really set in until the second week; in the first week there are too many eddying air streams and currents, too many unsorted personalities, too great a confusion of chemises and shorts.

ALISON ADBURGHAM

☆

The Trouble with Summer

HOW cometh on
So swift July?
How can have gone
All June, say I?
School term be fled
Five-sevenths through;
Spins my poor head
With things to do.

Ah well, I still
Have got July.
So first I will
Find out (say I)
From one more slow
Sweet summer day
Just where *did* go
All June. And May.

ANGELA MILNE

Top Secret

WHAT *am* I going to do? Mrs. Shaw is almost certain to tell Mrs. Crane what I told her. I wish I'd told her at the time not to tell her. Why didn't I think of it?

Perhaps I could tell her now, telephone her—only that might make it worse. There *are* women who positively delight in making trouble, and I know Mrs. Shaw. If I tell her not to tell Mrs. Crane she might tell her anyway and also that I told her not to tell her.

And then Mrs. Crane will be annoyed at my not telling her when I told Mrs. Shaw. And that alone will be enough to make her tell Mrs. Peel.

I'd better tell Mrs. Shaw not to tell Mrs. Crane I told her and not to tell her I told her not to tell her.

But what if Mrs. Shaw has already told Mrs. Crane? I'd better ring Mrs. Crane. And if Mrs. Shaw has already told her I'll tell her I was going to tell her myself and only told Mrs. Shaw first because I was telling her something else and it just came out. Then I could tell Mrs. Crane not to tell Mrs. Peel.

And if Mrs. Shaw tells Mrs. Crane I told her not to tell her, and not to tell her I told her not to tell her, I'll tell Mrs. Crane I didn't. I'll tell her I told her to tell her not to tell Mrs. Peel. And I'll tell her not to tell Mrs. Shaw I told her I'd told her to tell her not to tell Mrs. Peel, and I'd better tell her not to tell her I told her at all, or Mrs. Shaw will want to know why I told her not to tell her when I've told her myself.

Then I'll have done all I can. And anyway, it can hardly be traced to me; I don't even *know* Mrs. James.

MARJORIE RIDDELL

☆

Company Do

THE first thing to be absolutely clear about is that you're not going to this for fun. You're going (a) because it's free, (b) because it's expected of you, and (c) to score points.

You must decide what to wear—and make a note of it: a company wife who can't remember what she wore last time is exposing a frivolity of mind that will brand her husband as unsound. If you're just not interested in clothes

wear the plainest and most expensive black you can afford. But if you do take an interest, when making your choice you should bear firmly in mind your husband's status, company-wise. If he's a director you can wear Granny's wedding-gown, or a flour-sack, and get away with it: you will be considered charmingly eccentric. If he's a manager you must be smart but restrained (i.e. no smarter than a middling-chic director's wife). If he's a P.A. to someone you should aim at gaiety. Below the salt your best plan is to be unobtrusive, with perhaps one obvious but not too glaring mistake (e.g., brooch wrongly placed). Your seniors will be only too delighted to point this out to you, if you give them half a chance: and they will always remember it in your favour that you gave them such a gratifying opportunity to exercise their tact.

After the reception comes the vexed question of Tables. These are generally labelled with letters for the important people, and numbers for all those others. It's always a good thing to know the worst beforehand; and most husbands, with the help of the office grapevine, can manage this. However bad the worst may be, don't let it show. If you can pretend to be absolutely delighted with where you are (whether above or below your station) this spikes a lot of hostile guns. If you can give the

impression that, for you, protocol is a closed book covered with dust your table-mates will be fascinated and baffled at the same time. If one of them, trying to smoke you out, asks whether your husband doesn't work with so-and-so (mentioning someone who is very much his junior) your best plan is to say yes, you do seem to have heard the name, but why don't they ask your husband? This should give the impression that you have a secret weapon and must be handled with care.

Next comes the floor-show, and this is a bit tricky. Floor-shows at company do's are either (1) Ghastly, or (2) the one you saw last time at an associated company's do. (Some are both.) You must strike a balance between *blasé* superiority and hearty enjoyment.

The question of when to leave should be decided by how long you can hold out without cracking. On the whole it's better to leave second rather than first: but if you're at a table that's dead set on getting the Company's money's-worth it may be advisable to go first. Don't on any account go last, which would brand you as grasping.

If you *should* happen to find yourself in the company of fellow human beings all these rules go by the board. But don't count on it: it isn't likely to happen more than once in a Company lifetime.

CAROLINE DEE



Wild Life at Eighty

By PETER DICKINSON

"There is something extra satisfying about a perfectly executed four-wheel drift when the rhododendrons are in flower."

NOTHING, as the nature-writers keep saying, is more miraculous about Nature than its perpetual self-renewal. This is especially true of nature-writers; just when all seems ended, when the once-lush pastures of their prose are used up, sere and faded, suddenly there is a stirring, a whisper of coming summer, and somebody thinks of a new way of describing the smell of hay.*

To judge by the blossom which I have culled from the unlikely soil of the motoring column of the *Sunday Times* and stuck at the top of this article, it looks as if readers who are lucky enough to be alive and able to read the Sunday papers will soon be able to witness for themselves the whole astonishing drama of rebirth.

It may, and so probably will, be argued that motorists are all far too busy cleaning their cars or sitting in them on Sundays to get round to reading the

papers, and so the great public of natural nature-writer-readers is going to be faced with a way of life and a language that are totally foreign to it. This objection is unreal. Who, lying after breakfast in a snug flat high above Kensington, and already at home with articles beginning:

"Come Trundlemas, when the hedge-rows are still swathed in woolly cascades of frithock, as the old folk still call *Clematis vitalba* in this part of the country, Young Gurton, swadging-hook and blathe on shoulder, tramps down to the osier-priested brook to swadage my quarter-acre of underlea . . ."

—who, I say, is going to mind snuggling down a little further and reading this:

"Goodwood time I headed south in the new 1430 c.c. Fischer-Smith convertible, with the west wind ravishing such drifts of blossom from the chestnut-trees that I twice had to resort to the windscreen-wiper. The boisterous straight-through exhaust rather eliminated any bird-song I might have heard . . ."

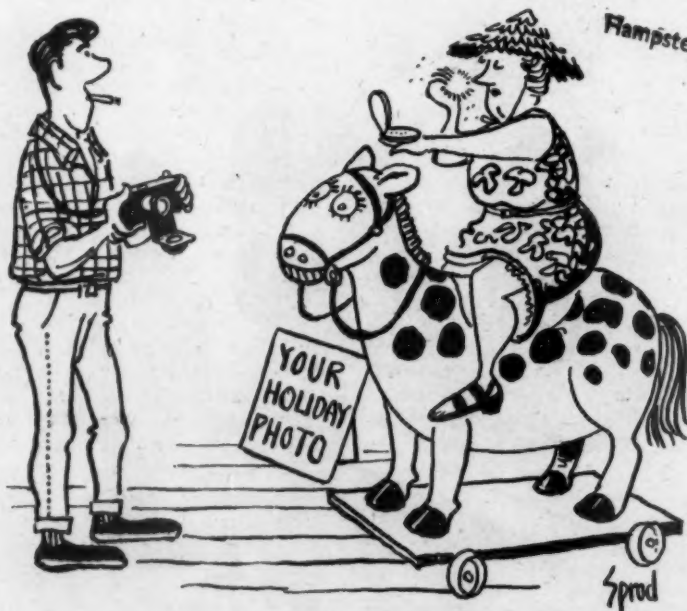
No, it is not the language and tone that are going to seem strange but the subjects; they will be, by comparison,

so large. Since Wordsworth Nature has been getting smaller and smaller and now we are down to flashlight photographs of spiders and evocative bits about bats. But soon mountains will be in again, and so will copper beeches and red deer, with a corresponding falling off of interest in our smaller song-birds. I can think of few naturalists qualified to tell a couple of warblers apart while taking an S-bend at seventy. By contrast there are several peaks in Scotland which have enough straight road near them for them to be kept fairly safely in view for several seconds at any speed you care to mention.

Unfortunately it is an intractable fact that the larger objects are the fewer of them there will be in a given area, and consequently the fewer to go round among the nature-writers. Poaching, I am afraid, may well be rife, and a fairly stern code of behaviour will have to be drawn up. While it is about it this may as well deal with kindred subjects, such as the writer who insists on driving about in an open car when his readers prefer to motor in saloons with the windows tight shut; then there is the man who spots something interesting when he has climbed out of his car to stretch his legs—can he decently pretend to have seen it from the road?

Such may well be the questions of the hour to-morrow, but I do not think they will remain so for long, partly because there are not going to be enough subjects to go round and partly because, after a bit of trying to compromise between the demands of highway and hedgerow, the same will be true of nature-writers.

*Specialist writers, who keep to things like the classification of hawkweeds or the defence postures of puffins, are a different matter, though even they have a sort of springtime, when the public discovers their existence.



"Read *Keys to Seven Rooms* and meet the human creepy-crawlies in a New York apartment house . . .

In this novel . . . the main characters are: ELI, businessman. Sets out to seduce his teen-age son's girl-friend . . .

PAULA, housewife. Refugee from Europe. Still hates Germans . . . The baker's delivery man is German-American. She plans to all-but seduce him—and then scream the house down . . .

ELLIOT, in publishing. He is trying to convince people that he is a normal man . . . *Daily Mirror*

He sounds a bit far-fetched.



The Great Paradox

THE main subject of discussion in the more sophisticated quarters of the City is the paradox of a recession set within a framework of inflation. In the United States production has fallen about 10 per cent from its peak, but none the less the cost of living continues to rise. The most striking specific example of the paradox is provided by the American steel industry which, though working at little more than half speed, is considering raising its prices—a most untypical and unprecedented reflection of the American way of competitive life.

Even in Britain, where a certain amount of slack is beginning to appear in the economy (and more seems to be expected by members of the Federation of British Industries), the underlying tendency of the cost of living is still upward—and this in spite of the fact that primary commodity prices have been tumbling. That, incidentally, is the second great paradox: why is it that wherever raw material prices rise the effect on the cost of living is immediate, whereas in these days the converse never applies? A kind of ratchet mechanism is at work to prevent any downward movement in the index of prices that really interests the consumer.

Faced with this paradox the powers that be in Britain are beginning to evolve the right kind of answer—an answer which may be summed up as "Take your foot off the brake, but don't put it on the accelerator." What is needed is re-expansion without inflation, which in this modern world of powerful trades unions is a difficult combination to achieve. But the steps recently taken—the lower Bank Rate, more generous industrial depreciation allowances, easing of the credit restrictions on the shipping and shipbuilding industries—are promising advances towards this elusive goal.

The beneficiaries of this re-expansionist policy will be found in most sectors

of industry. One of them will be British and Commonwealth Shipping, which combines the former Union Castle and Clan Lines. The Company has just issued a report that bristles with strength and confidence. It has decided not to go ahead with its £5½ million oil-tanker building programme, but instead is placing comparable orders for dry-cargo ships. This is a wise adjustment to the temporary over-expansion of the oil industry; but it is also a token of confidence in the future expansion of world trade.

More re-expansionist moves must be expected from the Government. Another reduction in Bank Rate? Some relaxation in the Chancellor's instructions to the Capital Issues Committee?

Since Ministers are politicians as well as statesmen we must expect some of the further re-expansionist moves to carry an electoral flavour. There is much talk of a Government scheme to help with house ownership and assist the building industry by the provision of ampler mortgage facilities to those who want to buy or build their own house. That would help an industry which is likely to be hit next year by reduced



"All Too Short a Date"

FOR people who live in towns summer spells leisure. But for those of us who live by the sea this is the season of drudgery. Having hibernated in comparative comfort we now throw open our houses to take in visitors. Little do they know how much they are taken in! At this time of year Devonian farmers do not pick up their bed and walk. They have to leave it behind. For the next few months most of them doss down in the box-room. Their wives sleep on a sofa downstairs.

Meanwhile, everybody is buying up enormous quantities of Californian peaches so that you can all enjoy the best farm food. In the small west-country villages the summer campaign is now under way. From Clovelly to Port Isaac the fishermen take their jerseys

industrial building; it would also help to create that house-owning democracy which is so dear to Conservative hearts.

But the danger—as in the case of a Government superannuation plan—is that of the State rushing in to do something which is already being well done by private enterprise. The building societies—the Halifax, Abbey National, Co-operative, Woolwich Equitable, Westbourne Park (to name some of the largest)—do an excellent job not merely in collecting the savings of millions of good citizens but in lending the money with appropriate regard for security.

If the State is to come into this picture it should be as an ally and not as a competitor. Let it, for example, guarantee that proportion of a mortgage which a cautious building society is not prepared to advance (the marginal 15 or 10 or 5 per cent of the value of the property), and much good may ensue. The building societies would continue their good work, apply their criteria in the assessment of the business they undertake, while the State would provide the marginal encouragement which could convert millions of tenants into house-owners.

LOMBARD LANE

and wellingtons out of mothballs and from a winter of television stagger out to brave the sea air. Fowls or tame rabbits are removed from their boats. Taxis are put on the roads again. Fishermen who look more like Marlon Brando than Walter Raleigh are rubbing six months' sleep from their eyes.

Many live in a council house—rent, six shillings a week. They take in cyclists for bed and breakfast and average £3 a night. The hotels, with their high rates, cannot compete with them. Some will average a fiver a day from those who want to go across the bay, and since you pay cash and there is no ticket given, the income-tax inspector doesn't even bother to ask a question. True, they have to maintain their boat, but if they use it for fishing two or three times a year they can obtain a subsidy from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

But mark you, the season is very short. From mid-September we have to close down again. But one can hardly describe the winter as being one of hardship. They merely go on the dole; and if that is not sufficient there is always Public Assistance to provide the little luxuries of life. The sea certainly yields its harvest, but the fish mainly go by excursion.

RONALD DUNCAN



CRITICISM



BOOKING OFFICE

Memoirs of a Younger Son

My Brother's Keeper. Stanislaus Joyce.
Faber, 25/-

A FRIEND of mine who found himself at the end of the war on the staff of the Military Government of Trieste told me that his duties had included extending help to Stanislaus Joyce, James Joyce's younger brother, who lived in that city, where he taught English. Asked what Professor Joyce was like, he replied: "A nice old man, but a terrible nuisance."

After reading this book (which has an introduction by Professor Richard Ellmann and a preface by Mr. T. S. Eliot) I can see that the description was probably a just one. All the same it is an admirable piece of work, and one that can be recommended entirely on its own merits. Obviously the reader must in the first instance concede that James Joyce himself was a figure worth close consideration. Apart from that, the picture of the author's own character and the early life of the Joyce family in Dublin make it alone well worth reading. It is a literary tragedy that Stanislaus Joyce died before his narrative was completed. We are taken, alas! only to the year 1903.

John Joyce, father of James, Stanislaus and a string of other children, had started life as a medical student with a little money of his own and a fair share of good looks and social gifts. He had drifted from job to job, ending, as his son says here, as one of the deserving poor, in that he was one of those who richly deserved to be poor. Obviously there was an unusual strain in the family; a gift for music, a tendency to be disorderly and drunken; a rage against life that rose above even an accustomed Irish discontent.

James Joyce's brilliance as a boy was recognized from the first. Jesuit-educated, he was a great carrier-off of prizes. The picture of the hero of *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* as a shy, bullied, ineffectual schoolboy seems, autobiographically speaking, even

wider of the mark than that of Beetle-Kipling in *Stalky and Co.* So far from being bad at games there was a whole sideboard at home crowded with cups, and an electro-plated teapot and coffee pot, all won by James Joyce at hurdles and walking events. He was also a keen cricketer and great admirer of Ranji and Spofforth.

Stanislaus Joyce was always fated to play second string to this greatly talented, ferociously egotistical, at times cruel and cold-hearted elder brother. It is clear from this book that Stanislaus possessed considerable literary gifts of his own, and although devoted to his brother, his character was in strong contrast. It is the clash of their very different temperaments that gives such flavour to the story.

Here we see James Joyce in various unexpected contexts: playing the role of the Headmaster in an amateur

performance of Anstey's *Vice Versa*: writing book reviews for the *Daily Express*: interviewing a French motorist taking part in the race for the Gordon Bennett Cup to be run in Ireland. He found no difficulty as a very young man in meeting relatively well-known figures like Arthur Symonds and W. B. Yeats, but it was one thing to have a reputation as a promising writer and another to have settled on a way to earn a living.

But James Joyce himself has been written about so much that now we should concentrate on Stanislaus. More direct, better behaved, probably a better critic, he is at the same time more violent than James—or "Jim," as he is called here. James's agnostic obsession with the Roman Church becomes in Stanislaus a really tremendous anti-clericalism. The reason for the title of the book is in part an ironical reference to Cain, in part to Stanislaus's efforts to make James drink less and lead a less irregular life. This latter aspect of their relationship had not yet developed in the period dealt with here. It was rightly felt by the editor that it should remain in spite of that.

I recommend the book to those not necessarily interested in *Ulysses* and the rest of James Joyce's writings on account of its vivid and often tragic qualities. For those already concerned with those books, the additional facts provided about the Joyce family and Dublin of that period are of the greatest value. The poverty and domestic misery in which the Joyces lived, keeping up at the same time to some degree the standards of a decidedly richer class (their father sometimes wore an eyeglass), and also enjoying themselves with a modicum of boisterous behaviour, is really astonishing. It explains much that took place on Bloomsday.

ANTHONY POWELL

NOVEL FACES



XXIII—NORMAN COLLINS

*The Facts of Fiction make it plain to see
He stakes the claim: London Belongs to Me.*

At School

Special Friendships. Roger Peyrefitte.
Secker and Warburg, 18/-

A dusting of irony gives piquancy to the romantic flavour of Roger Peyrefitte's impressive study of schoolboy friendships.

The novel, tedious in its beginnings, gathers great force, and we are swept along by the emotions of these boys who seem old beyond their years. It is a brilliant exposé of the evils of the constant "surveillance" and conscience-probing common in schools where the masters are themselves debarred from the normal outlet of female company. Peyrefitte is a stylist of high order. His translator does him well enough but should have had his script read before publication by a knowledgeable Catholic. I, a non-Catholic, discovered several small errors (the boys, for instance, are said to be members not of the *Sodality* but the *Children of Mary*, an exclusively female society), so one suspects there may be many more.

O. M.

The Wonderful O. James Thurber.
Hamish Hamilton, 12/6.

With three sentences in the thirty-three words of which only such necessary furniture as "the" and "and" and "a" are without an O, Mr. Thurber opens his fairy story. Beginning to read, one does not notice this fact; later, as the story fills with examples of what happens when the letter O is removed or unobtainable, one recognizes it as a deliberate ingenuity. The little book, elegantly produced, is obviously meant to be not only looked at but also read aloud, and children should delight in its playful rhythms and artful assonances. For their elders and for lovers of Thurber in less whimsical mood there are, first, the basis of this symbolic fable of the man in black who hated the letter O and tried to eradicate it from the life of the island of Ooroo, and second, a number of cunning, pregnant phrases that only they will appreciate.

R. M.

In Search of Complications. Eugene de Savitsch. Andre Deutsch, 21/-

At fifty-five few successful surgeons have been able to spare time for living, but Dr. Savitsch's experience could be liberally shared among ten ordinary men. Exiled from Petrograd as a boy, he reached America in 1923 after fighting with the White Russian remnants in Siberia. Before bacteria research led him to medical school he was a gingham salesman, a sugar handler, a bank clerk and a T.B. patient, and he completed his education as a doctor in the Belgian Congo and by touring the European masters of surgery.

But this autobiography is less important for its rich material than for its independence of mind and unconventional approach to life and medicine. Its first edition was swamped by the events of 1940. In its revised form it is unlikely to be ignored, not only because of the vitality and humour with which it is written but because it makes charges against the narcotics policy of the United States Public Health Service which will certainly have to be answered.

E. O. D. K.

AT THE PLAY

The Taming of the Shrew
(OPEN AIR)
For Adults Only (STRAND)

SHAKESPEARE'S instinct for the stop-press seldom fails to produce a winner. In Regent's Park Grumio's "Considering the weather, a taller man than I will take cold" went straight to the hearts of an audience menaced by black banks of Arctic storm-clouds that a little earlier had been bursting in all directions. But the rain held off, as if an invisible broom were hard at work in a small circle above our heads; our deck-chairs were marvellously dry, and swathed like old Cherokees in the army blankets sensibly provided by the management we were soon under the spell of Mr. Atkins' beautiful little garden theatre.

It is not, and never can be, a stage for subtleties. To be heard at all above the roaring of the birds at bedtime the actors must shout, and the length of their exits through the flanking bushes takes its toll of all but the fittest. It is a place for broad effects, and in producing *The Taming of the Shrew* Leslie French has worked in poster paint. He has carried this process farther, I think, than the

professors would have liked, bringing on the pedant much advanced in liquor, making Petruchio's servants play rugger with the joints denied to Katharina, and letting Petruchio interject a hearty "Hear, hear!" of approval during her lecture to the rebellious wives.

Well, there are various ways of doing this not very important play, as we learned from *Kiss Me, Kate!* This production is light-hearted, and it gets laughs. With character it is scarcely concerned. Katharina aside, the others take their bearings at the start of the play and remain on a set course. Bernard Brown's Petruchio, looking like the "Laughing Cavalier" and unshakable in his Boat-Race Night demeanour, is not to be despised, but he ends much as he began. Robert Atkins as Baptista booms splendidly, a vintage backwoods peer, and Leslie French capers resourcefully as Grumio. But Cecilia Sonnenberg does manage, quite effectively, Katharina's journey from rage to meekness, and she delivers her big volley of priggishness with a disarming humour. Whether Malcolm Taylor's Pedant has any right to be drunk is a matter for high disputation, but he made me laugh, and I am for him. The sets, by Nature out of the Ministry of Works, are in fine leaf this year.



RON MOODY

23

HUGH PADDICK

MIRIAM KARLIN

(For Adults Only)

I thought *For Amusement Only* had too many damp squibs, but four or five items of which any revue would be glad. Its successor *For Adults Only*, by the same team, seems to be on a lower but a slightly more consistent level. Numbers that start shrewdly on what should have been a good target grow blunted, as in Hugh Paddick's impersonation of a cynical Sunday Observance nuisance and the skit on the adolescent theories of the Royal Court. The two enormously genteel B.B.C. commentators reporting on the last hours of Sodom might have led home a winner, but just don't. Even the new edition of the Co-op's amateur production, this time a hick American musical, is not so funny as the original, though it has rich moments.

The authors have banked almost

REP SELECTION

Guildford Rep, *The Chalk Garden*, to July 5th.
Playhouse, Salisbury, *The Potting Shed*, to July 5th.
Marlowe, Canterbury, *The Cat and the Canary*, to July 5th.
Theatre Royal, Lincoln, *Two Dozen Red Roses*, Italian comedy, to July 5th.

everything on verbal wit, and this is very hit-and-miss. They assume in their audience an encyclopædic knowledge of stage scandals, film personalities and the higher lunacies of television, and peasants with, say, the mud of Hampstead on their boots may find themselves a little puzzled by so much closed-shop gossip. The single venture into politics is simply silly.

The pity is that clearly the cast would

have known exactly what to do with sharper material. When well served they make no mistakes. The most interesting of them is Ron Moody, a young-old man with his own eccentric sense of comedy. His mime as a romantic porter at Heathrow comes off beautifully in the manner of Marcel Marceau, and his operatic turn as the manager of Maria Callas describing a counter-revolution is splendid. He and Hugh Paddick are delightful as street buskers, and Mr. Paddick, who has a very useful range, proves it in his imitations of some of the celluloid lives of Alec Guinness. Miriam Karlin's sardonic attack is seen at its best in her supermarket shopper, coughing herself to death while she piles her basket madly with unwanted rubbish, in her management of Harrod's elopement service, and in her Austrian maid who has got her mistress where she wants her. But the cloud-borne meeting of Dylan Thomas and James Dean, and the fairy-story rag of the Ludovic Kennedys, are in poor taste and anyway in the damp-squib bracket. Early in the programme come a lament over the last deb and a little ballet of two unicorns who turned a deaf ear to Noah, both so fresh and charming that it was sad to find nothing of the same quality in the rest of the evening.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

My Fair Lady is worth planning for, even five years ahead (Drury Lane—7/5/58). *The Dock Brief* and *What Shall We Tell Caroline?* (Garrick—16/4/58), two clever one-act comedies by a new dramatist. *Not in the Book* (Criterion—16/4/58), a neat and amusing thriller.

ERIC KEOWN

AT THE PICTURES

Ten North Frederick Scandal in Montmartre

THE best and most moving part of *Ten North Frederick* (Director: Philip Dunne) is an episode which is essentially subsidiary to the main story. The title of the novel by John O'Hara is only in the broadest sense a title for the film; although this is the story of the people who lived at 10 North Frederick Street in Gibbsville, Pennsylvania, it is mainly concerned with Joe Chapin (Gary Cooper), the head of the family, and the way the influence of his fearsome wife Edith (Geraldine FitzGerald) indirectly drove him to his death in five years. But in my view incomparably the strongest bit of it is an episode which is really an illustrative example of her malign influence, the story of the doomed love affair between their daughter Ann (Diane Varsi) and Charley, a young jazz trumpeter (Stuart Whitman).

It begins, this episode, conventionally enough: she is attracted by him at a dance, and more or less throws herself at him. He is a brash, rather uncouth young man; flattered by this attention, he softens, and they are soon in love. Miss Varsi is very good, but it is no great task for the girl to arouse one's sympathy on these occasions. What makes the little tragedy so unusually striking and moving here is the performance of Mr. Whitman. Having come up the hard way, Charley has developed a defensive shell of cockiness and off-handed self-assurance, and Mr. Whitman most excellently shows how this is dissolved by unexpected tenderness. In a later scene, when the political associates of the girl's father are determined to pay off the young man, his performance struck me as superb. Sincere and nervously hopeful, he is called before a little group of ruthless, malicious, experienced men he has never seen before; at first he angrily refuses the cheque, then in a subtle way he is made to believe he has no choice—and his fatal, automatic reaction is to try to rescue his pride by assuming his old swagger, just before realizing that the father of the girl he loves is present. The writing of this scene (screenplay by the director) has plenty to do with its effect, but it is the acting of Mr. Whitman that makes it terrific; I have never known any film scene convey such a feeling of despair.

This, as I say, is subsidiary, just one of the shattering blows received by the girl's father (for he had idolized her, and this kills her affection for him and makes her leave home) as a result of the consuming ambition of his wife, who drives him to all sorts of actions he does not believe in and despises him when they go wrong. The film is full of good moments, and good playing; I think that scene is outstanding, but it is all more worth while than most. Pay no attention to the misleading, sensational publicity



Joe Chapin—GARY COOPER

[*Ten North Frederick*]

which, on the assumption that the point of the story is too deep for the great public, assiduously cheapens it in phrases calculated to scare away any sensitive person who reads them.

Of the others, I got most enjoyment out of the French *Scandal in Montmartre* (Director: Alfred Rode), although it is rather incoherent and not easy to follow as a story. It begins with the death in mid-song of a night-club girl, and then traces the events that led up to it; any suspense that develops comes only from uncertainty about which of all these double- and treble-crossers will eventually give her poison, and why. I think I know who, but I'm still not quite sure why, and there is little attempt to make you care one way or the other; though she seems a nice girl (Claudine Dupuis). The enjoyable things are the details, and the acting—some of it quite unsuited to the tone of the story, which is after all essentially a crime drama—of certain minor characters. Jean Tissier has one or two very funny scenes as the boss of the night-club (it is a joy to watch him demonstrating to the girls, at a rehearsal, the way to make a strip-tease act really piquant), and in fact the whole picture of the routine at such a place—where a dancer gossiping off-stage may be seen casually massaging her calf at almost eye-level—is very entertainingly given. Empty and pretty disjointed, but by no means boring.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The others this time were *Too Much, Too Soon*, a version of Diana Barrymore's sensational autobiobiography aimed at people who can't feel anything unless their emotions are flogged, and *Fräulein*, a story of a girl in Berlin during and after the war which shows Germans and Russians—and Americans—to be exactly like what the average American movie-goer always knew them to be. The best film in London is still *The Key* (11/6/58); *Hot Spell* (25/6/58) is enjoyable; and by this time you've surely heard about *Around the World in Eighty Days* (17/7/57).

Ten North Frederick (see above) is among the releases, and another is the good Western *The Law and Jake Wade* (18/6/58). *St. Louis Blues* is a rather pedestrian account of the life of the composer, W. C. Handy, with nothing like as much music as you might expect.

RICHARD MALLETT

ON THE AIR

Party Manners

HOW painstakingly the television planners strive to cater for all tastes! It isn't everyone, after all, who wants to sit through stuff like the BBC's "Monitor" night after night, with all them long words and all them



LOU PREAGER

(Palais Party)

interviews with famous people you never heard of—and some of them not even sexy-looking, so what are they for? There are viewers whose idea of fun and excitement is to watch a show with a band playing ordinary dance music, glimpses of people actually dancing in a ballroom, a Spot Prize for answering questions like "How many sides has an oblong?", a Famous Singer advertising her Latest Disc, a couple of professionals snootily demonstrating a tango or a waltz, and a Find the Singer contest. All this, and Lou Preager, is in fact to be seen and heard in "Palais Party" (A-R) every week with monotonous regularity. The show comes from the Hammersmith Palais and has a curious atmosphere of its very own which I find endearing. If pressed I would describe this atmosphere as politely scruffy. The evening dress somehow looks hired, the Quiz Master reminds me of a jolly grocer I know in Liverpool (he is in fact an accomplished band-leader in his own right), and the dancers wear any old thing and don't give a damn for anyone. I'll bet the place smells of scented cachous, and I have a haunting mental picture of the Find the Singer contestants waiting crammed in a dressing-room under the stage, with two sinks and a row of faded gilt chairs, shooting their cuffs and swapping yarns about their adventures in the Area Heats.

Lou Preager, who is in charge, devised the show and has nursed it along with great enthusiasm. He is obviously very proud of its progress. A busy, nervy, roguish, jaunty little man, who has a brave bash at being suave, he appears to have been polished all over with solid brilliantine. He pops on and off the

screen, fiddling with bits of paper and tripping over his lines as he talks away nineteen to the dozen. "And now let's meet Singer Number Two," he gabbles happily, and consults his *aides memoires* as Singer Number Two comes on. "Now Edith—it is Edith, isn't it?—you come from Weston-super-Mare, and you won your heat at Blackpool, was it? Yes. And you, er—are you married? You are? Well isn't that fine! And—er—any children? A boy and a girl! That makes, let me see, one of each, doesn't it? Ha-ha. And—er—what are you going to—*Be My Love*. Edith is going to sing *Be My Love*." And off he goes to conduct the band, while Edith plunges into an imitation of some current pop favourite. (They plunge in, in fact, with hardly any preparation, so that quite often it takes them a little time to adjust their tempo to that of the rhythm section. Surely they're entitled to a few more bars of intro?)

By the time these notes appear a Dream Girl Contest should be under way, and I don't advise anybody to miss that.

ATV, for reasons best known to themselves, are giving us a series ("a comedy series") called "The Randall Touch." The Randall touch is not light. Twenty years ago this stuff might have amused the kids. To-day I see no hope for it, except that some of the kids have grown up now and haven't changed a bit. It is conceivable that Leslie Randall, given a good play and some very firm production, might be acceptable in a stage farce. The present script, by Gerald Kelsey and Dick Sharples, would break the heart of a Danny Kaye.

There are times when I turn with relief to Patrick Moore's monthly "Sky at Night." Bruised and shaking from the relentless flood of entertainment (why do we need all this entertainment?), I find it relaxing to hear the earnest Mr. Moore talk about his beloved Red Giants, and nebulae, and light-years—soothing to watch his models and diagrams proving conclusively that I, and my television set, and even Mr. Dimpleby, are but small things blinking our tiny instant in the vastness of eternity, and making far too much fuss about it. I recommend this programme wholeheartedly. It is as relaxing as a warm bath after a night at the dogs.

HENRY TURTON

PUNCH INDEX

The indexes of PUNCH contributions are now issued separately. The latest, for January to June, 1958, may be obtained free on application to The Circulation Manager, PUNCH, 10 Boulevard Street, London, E.C.4.

Readers who have their copies bound in the standard binding covers need not apply. The indexes are supplied with the covers.

CHESTNUT GROVE

G. L. Stampa drew for PUNCH from 1894 until his death in 1950



"BEHIND THE SCENES"

First Judge. "BREACH OF PROMISE STILL RUNNING?"

Second Judge. "GOING WONDERFULLY. NO STANDING ROOM. WHAT ARE YOU DOING?"

First Judge. "A BUILDING CONTRACT. WRETCHED BUSINESS; NOT A SOUL IN THE PLACE!"

December 14 1885

Toby Competitions

No. 23—Something Fabulous

COMPETITORS are invited to devise a Fable with a contemporary setting and a thoroughly unmoral Moral. Limit 150 words.

A prize consisting of a framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up will receive Toby bookmarks. Entries (any number, but each on a separate piece of paper and accompanied by a separate entry token, cut out from the bottom left-hand corner of this page) by first post on Friday, July 11, to TOBY COMPETITION No. 23, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Toby Competition No. 20 (All In Favour)

Competitors were asked to argue in favour of child labour, transportation of criminals, the Game Laws, the pillory, or a property qualification for the franchise. The property qualification had only one supporter and the Game Laws none. The pillory tended to attract readers with strong views on the sale of deteriorating vegetables. Entries in favour of transportation often involved cumbersome compliments to Australia. Few of the child labour entries came from child-lovers.

The winner of the framed *Punch* original is:

L. J. HUGHES

23 CHERRY GARDEN LANE
FOLKESTONE, KENT

This was his entry:

The case for transportation can surely be argued on economic grounds.

- (1) To export surplus products is always a sound principle.
- (2) Costs of long-term storage of such products are always high.
- (3) Mobile shipping and well-trained seamen are important items in a maritime trading nation's real wealth. This country must keep its shipping fully employed in spite of recessions in world trade.
- (4) The development of virgin territories—in this case in Antarctica—will undoubtedly bring results.
- (5) The unhealthy disregard for authority shown by the transportees while in this country will suffer a sea-change and become the healthy disregard for authority so often a praiseworthy feature of the pioneer settlers' way of life.

Among the runners-up were:

Child Labour? Certainly!

How else can we right the chronic imbalance in the worker/pensioner ratio? Starting at 7 would add 8 years, or 16 per cent to the work-span—and sell the National Insurance Fund. Moreover, long-unappreciated statistical evidence indicates that the industrial accident rate would rise whilst the normal life-expecta-

tion would decline towards its more economic 19th century level, leaving fewer pensioners to share the larger and—at last—solvent fund.

Less obviously, "premature" employment stunts growth. Such a saving in clothing and housing the nation!

Teachers' holidays lengthen; mothers work. Soon, children will demand employment to fill the lonely hours between each day's viewing. And wouldn't Mother rest easier at the Odeon or the "Crown" knowing Johnnie to be safely off the streets?—doing 2 till 10 at the pit.

Graham Williams, 8 Little Heath, Charlton, London, S.E.7

The Deportation of Criminals, hitherto unsuccessful because of the limited scope of its application, must now be examined in the light of present progress and the foreseeable future.

During the next 50 years nations having a criminal surplus should be granted lease on territories at that Polar region farthest removed from them. The United Nations would control these territories and provide inspectors to rigorize deportee conditions. World Surplus foodstuffs could be stored and profits go to U.N.C.L.E. (United Nations Child Labour Exchange.)

Thereafter criminals to be classified technically and put into orbit. In their various capacities they would staff enormous satellite cosmic power stations, rotating round the Earth transmitting energy by beam to collecting stations on a world-wide electric grid system.

Political crimes of first magnitude might be rewarded by a managership of such a generator—a fitting end for an exponent of power politics.

Peter Gardner, New House, Easthampton, Kingsland, Leominster

Millions of child-years are now being squandered on learning useless information, or being taught by certificated child-minders to make raffia mats and slipper-boxes of unsaleable badness. At holiday time, parents, who necessarily regard their children as voracious parasites, publicly complain that uncertificated amateurs should not have to endure and combat the bickering of bored children. In due course they become boss children at school, leave, and become useless nobodies again at the start of their life's work.

If every child of six did half an hour's saleable work a day, increasing the daily stint by half an hour every birthday, he would exchange boredom for skill, learn painlessly the nature of his contract with Society, shorten adult working hours, launch into full-time employment with confidence and gain the respect accorded to wage-earners from everyone—maybe even his parents. And I mean it.

Trevenen Peters, 69 Renters Avenue, Hendon, N.W.4

Deportin's sportin,
Prison.

Dr. R. M. MacPhail, Saxilby, Lincoln

The other runners-up, who will also receive *Punch* bookmarks, are:

Michael Freeman, 31 Coroner's Lane, Widnes, Lancs; David Hebden, 36 Clanricarde Gardens, London, W.2; R. C. Howard, 11 Lovelace Road, Surbiton; Joyce Taylor, 55 Laburnum Walk, Malvern; Roger Till, 14 Western Hill, Durham.

Evening Out

By INEZ HOLDEN

"THE tall dark man was at our table to the extent that he was under it."

Giselle was telling me, in her inconsequential way, about her evening out.

"He was not so much dark as dusty," she went on. "They don't really sweep the floors very well in these places, you know. I could see he was tall by the length of his legs, but I had no idea who he was because by the time I got there the other guests had closed the ranks and the only place left was mine—between two writers. Of course I wouldn't have gone to the party at all if it hadn't been for Doctor Dubobo."

"Your host?"

"No. That was Laddie Lunge the American polo player, who works as a bank clerk in New York because he's a millionaire and wants to prove to his dad, a multi-millionaire, that he isn't a no-good guy. As for Doctor Dubobo, he's really a quank."

"A mixture of quack and crank?"

"Exactly. A few unorthodox ideas, some cheap mysticism of an expensive sort, with a bit of hypnosis thrown in. Doctor Dubobo can also walk barefoot over red-hot coals, but he usually does that in the East—it isn't suited to Western life. Personally I've never seen Doctor Dubobo without his socks."

"But how was he responsible for your going to the party where the man was under the table?"

"Because he said I should see more people. 'You're well on the way to becoming a recluse,' he said. Doctor Dubobo once had a practice in New York where a recluse is considered the worst thing you can be. I told him that as people tired me I assumed that I must, equally, tire them and so seeing people made me feel guilty. 'No, no,' Doctor Dubobo said, 'an evening out would do you the world of good. Just accept the next invitation you get.'"

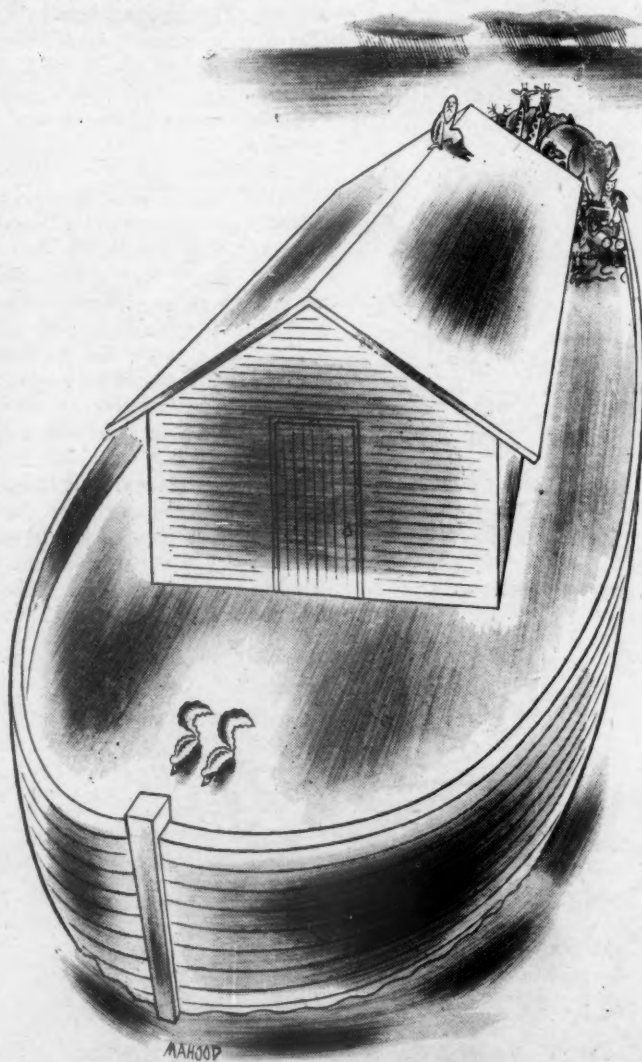
"But why do you have to do everything Doctor Dubobo says?" I asked.

"Hypnotism was all the rage in New York last year," she said. "Do you know there was even a dance called the Hypno-Glide? But I'm not given over to fashion to that degree myself. With me it's more because of Doctor Dubobo being able to walk barefoot over burning coals. That's so extraordinary that I

thought he must be superior to other men and therefore always right. So when Laddie Lunge asked me to supper in a sort of night-club, or maybe it was more of a musical grill really, I went along. Now about these two writers: the one on my left wrote prose poems, in French, on inanimate objects, and the one on my right was a slice-of-life novelist from the States. Well, you see what I mean about the stress and strain of social life when you're supposed to talk to people on their own subject.

What do I know about the inner life of a *pomme de terre* or how it all strikes a stone?—and I'm no better on sweat and brutality down in the deep South. Still, the prose poet turned out to be a gossipy chatterbox and the tough novelist entirely obsessed with his collection of eighteenth-century thimbles back home, so I didn't have to cook up any conversation."

"And no one said a word about the unknown guest under the table. Didn't that seem funny to you?"





"Nothing about drunkenness ever seems funny to me," Giselle answered. "More a subject for profound melancholy, I'd say. But quite soon I did get to feeling guilty about the way we were guzzling while the guy on the floor wasn't eating, so I dropped some bread down to him. No response. Then I slipped him some caviar on toast. This time he took it out of my hand like a dog, but it wasn't really him, or a dog either, because the restaurant cat had come up from the kitchens. Most cats like caviar. They can't get enough of it, and I mean that literally. Already I was feeling tired and longing for solitude, but that was nothing compared with my state of mind after they brought Laddie the bill. You see, it was a very long bill, and when, rather unexpectedly, Laddie held it up to examine some item more closely it looked like a town crier's proclamation. Then Laddie suddenly remarked, quite loudly, 'I don't pay couvert.'"

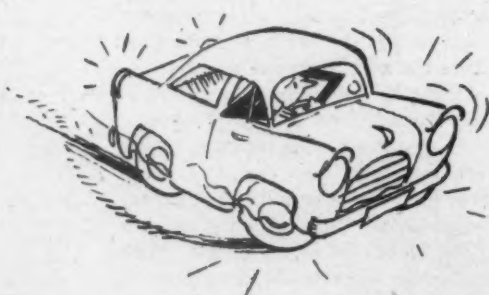
"Good Lord."

"That's exactly what the waiter said, indeed he was so amazed that he fetched another waiter and finally the *maitre d'hôtel*. The woman sitting opposite me had a curious chihuahua-like face centre-ing a powerful pair of earrings, and she said that this was the first time she had been out with a man who disputed the bill and she hoped it would be the last. Another girl with a greedy look and a baying voice said she had considered marrying Laddie at one time but since he had been hit on the head at polo he had been subject to sudden fits of rage. 'I might have been murdered in my bed,' she said. The men didn't behave any better than the women.

One of them walked out without saying good-bye to anyone. Several remarked that millionaires, like everything else, were not what they had been, and two others offered, somewhat ostentatiously, to pay the couvert charges themselves. But Laddie declined, clenched his fist, banging it on the table and shouting, 'The couvert charge for my guests doesn't bother me, but I'm not going to pay for him down there.' It was about this time that I noticed that Doctor Dubobo had come in and taken the place of the guest who had gone off as a protest against his host's behaviour."

"Couldn't Doctor Dubobo do anything to help? Hypnotize the whole lot or something of that sort?"

"I daresay he could," Giselle answered, "but he didn't. As a matter of fact it got worse. It was like a saloon scene in a Western where no one dare move for fear of getting shot. And then, of course, we were afraid that if Laddie wouldn't pay the couvert charge for the man on the floor and wouldn't let anyone else pay it either we might be in pawn in this musical night-club grill-room for ever. Then, at last, it all ended. The *maitre d'hôtel*, who had gone off to consult a higher authority, came hurrying back and said it was all a mistake and the extra couvert charge should never have been put on the bill. Laddie added more bank notes to the tip and everyone began grinning like maniacs and exchanging compliments in a nervous sort of way. While all this was going on, and I was wondering if it wasn't almost more of a strain than it had been before, the man came out from under the table, bowed politely, and went away. This gave the prose poet on my left a chance to explain the circumstances that had led up to this situation. It seemed that an Argentine polo-player, also a



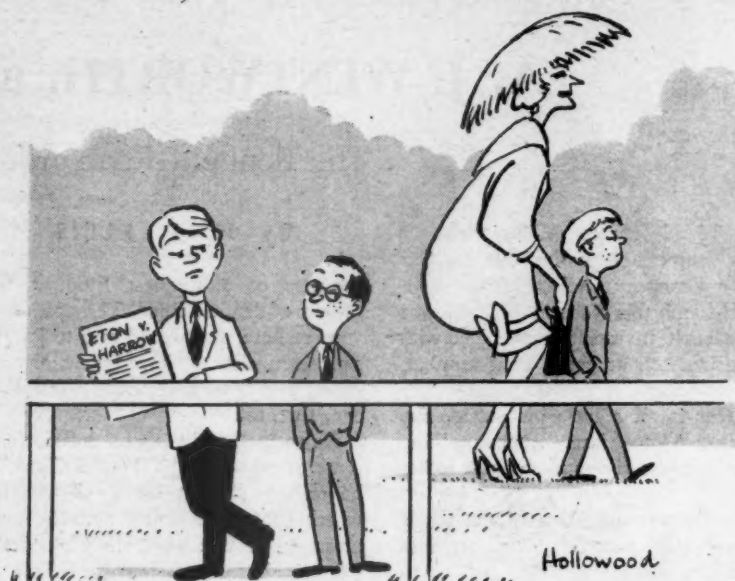
millionaire, had been dining earlier in another part of the restaurant. On his way out he had come up to speak to Laddie, and during their conversation he had sunk to the ground. Laddie, knowing that this man was also one of that vast army of rich play-boys who had been hit on the head at polo, refused to have him removed. 'Oh polo, polo,' said the prose poet. 'How strange that these millionaires should go to all that trouble and expense to send themselves crazy when concussion, at least, is one of the worst things in life that's free.'

Well, that's all about my evening out, except that Doctor Dubobo, taking me home in his splendid chauffeur-driven car, remarked what a delightful party it had been and how Laddie Lunge was the hell of a nice guy and what a good thing it was for a solitary type like me to get around and mix with folk. And when I pointed out that most of the folk were dangerous lunatics anyhow and we'd all been within a fraction of a 'free fight Doctor Dubobo only said 'I didn't notice anything untoward.'"

"Does Doctor Dubobo still insist on your going through this rigorous social life?" I asked.

"Why no," Giselle answered. "Because he's not my doctor now. I suddenly realized that if he could come through that evening unscathed, and not noticing anything unusual, then it wasn't really extraordinary that he didn't mind walking barefoot over burning coals, and if that wasn't extraordinary after all then Doctor Dubobo wasn't any better than other men and might even be slightly worse. Besides, there's no point in my going around half-hypnotized by a quank. You do see that, don't you?"

I said that I did see it.



"Don't look now, but isn't Maltravers's mama wearing the same ensemble she wore for Henley, the Garden Party and Ascot?"

Pale Man on the Bakerloo

HOW anxiously he looks, that pale-faced man
Who bought his house on the instalment plan,
Who nightly sits spellbound before 'TV:

How sad is he,
His mind being tethered tight, that was born free.

Daylong he sits before a polished desk.
He loves nor loves not. He is picturesque,
With his black hat, striped trouser, polished shoe,

Give him his due;
How brightly glows he in the Bakerloo!

And on his knees the case, quaintly called brief,
Holds words and figures strange beyond belief:
No sober monk, close-templed in Tibet,
Has ever met

Such ritual writings, crabbed but neatly set,

As these, that speak of diamond-drills, or drains,
Taxes, or torts, or electronic brains;
Bulges that bag with terrible designs,

With mystic lines
Of necromantic, cabbalistic signs.

His faith is complex and his faith is vague;
His God is like the statue of Earl Haig,
Known to exist, though barely apprehended,
More safe than splendid;

Least said about such matters, soonest mended.

Some thought is in his mind, some thought that rankles;
His shares have dropped, his daughter has thick ankles,
His rates are due . . . I long to see some spark

Glow in his dark,
And watch him smile, this side of Regent's Park.

R. P. LISTER

A. J. WENTWORTH, B.A. (Retd.)

The Penfield Road Affair

By H. F. ELLIS

A MAN named Willis, who is something to do with the Gas Company I believe, called about the H-bomb this morning. He told me that sheep were eating grass coated with Strontium 90, or some such number, and wanted me to protest about it.

"This is all a little bit outside my province," I told him. I know nothing about sheep, and was in any case rather busy.

"Is the extermination of the whole human race outside your province then?" he asked.

"It is certainly more than I have time for this morning," I said, ignoring the rudeness of his manner. "At the moment I have my hands full with this

business of a Request Stop at the bottom of Penfield Road. Perhaps, while you are here, you would care to join in a protest against the intransigent attitude of the bus company? Only a few days ago, I am told—"

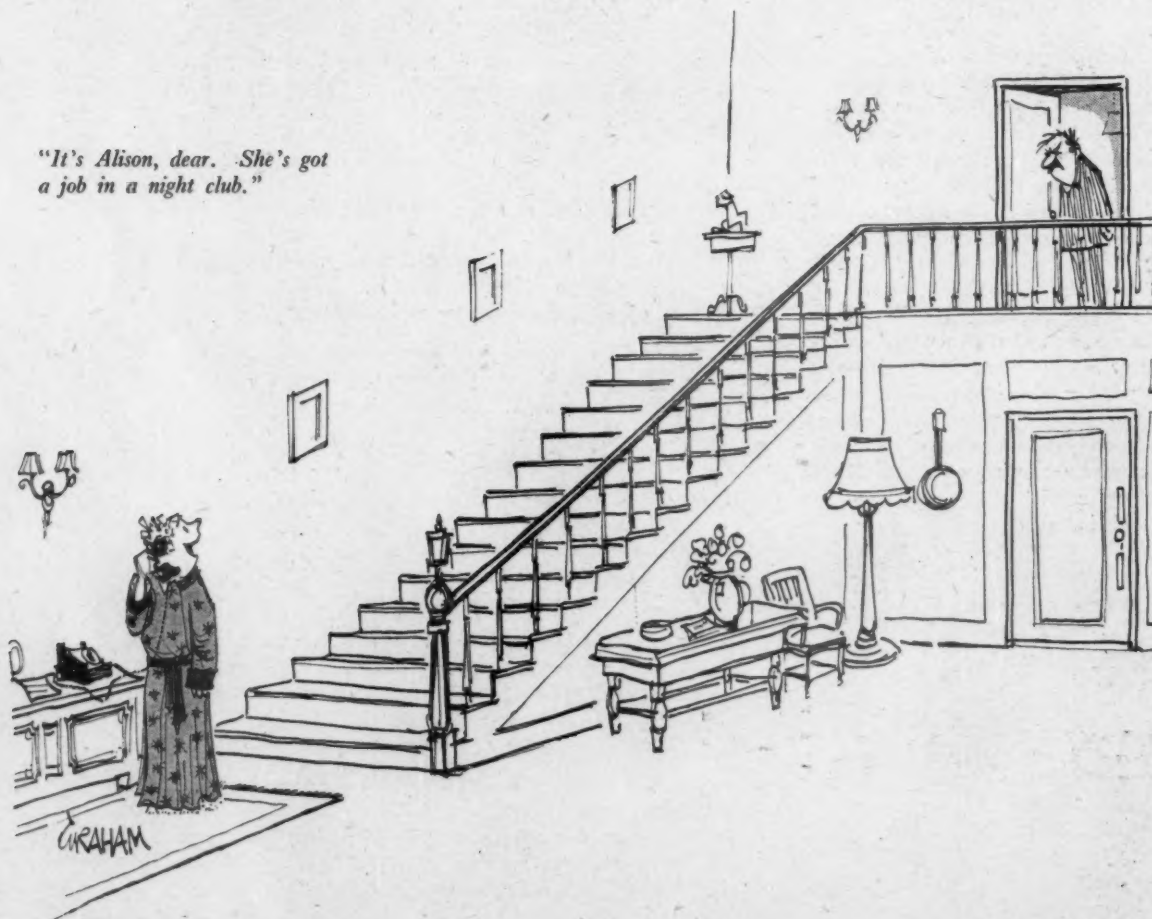
He seemed to be a man without any sense of proportion. "Penfield Road!" he cried. "A fat lot it will matter whether the buses stop at Penfield Road or anywhere else when there's nobody left to ride in them and the whole of Europe is a desolate waste. It's people like you, with their noses buried in their own petty little local affairs, that are bringing the world to the brink of

destruction. Can't you realize that already seaweed is being dredged up with point nought six of a fatal dose of radiation in it? And you talk about bus stops!"

I am not the man to be hectored on my own doorstep.

"Listen to me, young man," I said. "When I was your age there were plenty of people going about saying that the end of the world was at hand. They used to hold meetings, I remember with the slogan 'Millions Now Living Will Never Die.' A fine state we should all have been in if I had listened to them and decided it was not worth while to go on teaching my boys trigonometry. Get on with your own job, my lad, and

"It's Alison, dear. She's got a job in a night club."



leave sheep and seaweed to wiser heads." For two pins I would have told him to get his hair cut and take his bicycle clips off before calling uninvited at strange houses. I did in fact say something of the kind, more or less *sotto voce*, and he went away muttering.

I had meant to get a strong letter off to the bus company (or the *Advertiser* perhaps would be better), but this Willis interview unsettled me and after thinking things over for an hour or two I set off to change a book at the library. Mrs. Wheeler was there, half-way up a ladder, and we chatted for a while.

"I feel like Romeo and Juliet," she said. "Why not come and have dinner one evening, Mr. Wentworth? On Friday week? One or two people will be there whom you might like to meet, if you haven't met them already."

"I'm sure I shall be delighted to meet them even if I *have* met them already," I said politely. I had not intended any joke, but Mrs. Wheeler began to laugh so I joined in. "That would depend, wouldn't it?" she said. "Suppose I asked Mr. Willis?"

"Willis!" I said. "You mean the gas man?"

"He says you threw his bicycle clips in his face. I must say it doesn't sound very likely, but he *did* seem angry. Of course, he did not say it to me, but they were outside Gooch's just now and I couldn't very well help hearing. Then that man Odding—"

"Odding?"

"Yes. They were talking, you see. Odding said nothing would surprise him. He said you rang his wife up the other day and threatened to pelt her with carrots. There was something else, but I had my shopping to do, and of course—"

"This is getting beyond a joke," I broke in angrily. "If those two men are getting together to spread slanderous stories about me I shall certainly take action. The whole thing is a mare's nest. I simply rang up Mrs. Odding to explain that if she heard any silly stories about my—about carrots being thrown at her at the greengrocer's it was all a misunderstanding. She is unfortunately an Estonian—"

"But, Mr. Wentworth, surely even an Estonian would know whether she was or was not being pelted with carrots. I mean if it wasn't true, I don't quite see—"

"Exactly," I said. "The carrots have been trumped up against me by ill-disposed gossips. There were a few on the floor, not more than a few, and nobody was hurt. Actually, the whole thing started with a lettuce."

"You threw a lettuce at Mrs. Odding?"

"I neither threw, nor threatened to throw, anything at anybody, Mrs. Wheeler. I merely gave vent to an expression at the greengrocer's—"

"Muriel!" Mrs. Wheeler called out suddenly. "Mr. Wentworth is telling me how he gave vent to an expression at the greengrocer's."

I had not noticed Miss Stephens come into the library. She now joined us with an "Oh, do tell!" and the two ladies listened sympathetically while I gave a short account of the circumstances that had led me to make a hasty remark in Wrightson's shop about Mrs. Odding's order for lettuces, and how my attempt to apologize to the woman on the telephone had been misinterpreted by her fool of a husband. "The whole thing is a storm in a tea-cup," I ended.

"I don't suppose you really threw Willis's cycle-clips in his face either," Mrs. Wheeler commented.

"Oh no?" Miss Stephens cried. "Mr. Wentworth, you really *are*!"

I explained that the man had no doubt been speaking figuratively. "I may be old-fashioned," I said, "but I would never dream of going to anybody's front door without removing my bicycle clips, and I do not expect people to come to mine without removing theirs. All the same, I should have said nothing of course if the man had been civil. Standing there lecturing me about seaweed and decrying the Request Stop, when I am old enough to be his father, though I am bound to say that I should have to be a *great* deal older before I would dream—however, that is neither here nor there. The man was uncivil, and I sent him away with a flea in his ear, as my old nurse used to say."

Both ladies were blowing their noses, and there was a short silence.



"I'm sure he richly deserved it," Mrs. Wheeler said. "He was rude about the—about the Request Stop, you say?"

"I thought he would be better employed in joining me in a protest about the Penfield Road business than in badgering people with a lot of nonsense about radioactive sheep. 'Get your hair cut,' I told him, 'and leave all that tomfoolery to wiser heads.'"

"That settled him, I should think," Mrs. Wheeler said. "But I *am* so glad you are taking the Request Stop so seriously. And what a splendid idea to organize a protest!"

"Hardly that. Hardly that, dear lady," I said. "I am merely writing a letter to the *Advertiser*, which I think will do some good."

"I certainly mustn't miss *that*," Miss Stephens said.

Their interest and enthusiasm encouraged me to go straight home and write a fairly stiff letter to the local paper, without further delay. It will make the West Acre and Fenport Transport Company sit up, I fancy.

* * * * *

This Penfield Road bus-stop affair is becoming more of a nuisance than it is worth. A day or two after posting my letter to the *Advertiser* it occurred to me to walk out and see the actual terrain, what was involved in the way of distances between existing stops, etc. "Get out

into the field, Wentworth," my old C.O. used to say to me in the last war, and though I never quite became used to being spoken to as if I were a horse, I am sure his advice was sound. An ounce of knowledge is worth a deal of theory, as they say.

It was a considerable shock to me to find that there is already a Request Stop at Penfield Road. I can only suppose that the bus company had got wind of the fact that the matter was being taken up by someone who was not likely to be put off by excuses and evasions, and had decided to anticipate what they knew to be an unanswerable demand. I felt very badly let down, and my first thought was of course, to withdraw the letter I had written to the *Advertiser*. This meant fourpence in a telephone kiosk which I can ill afford.

"I wrote you a letter the day before yesterday," I said as soon as I was through. "About the Request Stop at Penfield—"

"Do you want Basting?" a voice said.

"Certainly not," I replied. "I wish the letter to be withdrawn immediately. It must not appear."

"You want the Editor then," the voice said. "Only he's out."

"Who is that?" I asked sharply. "I must speak to the Editor. This is a matter of the utmost—"

"Mr. Basting's gone, see? If it's about the letter, it's in. This is Partridge 'ere, the boy, and it'll be out Friday."

"No, no," I said. "It must come out now. The letter must not appear. I am speaking from Penfield Road, and the fact is that a bus stop has recently been installed. That being so—"

"We knew that, o' course," the boy said.

"Then naturally you will not print my letter, which was written in ignorance of the facts."

"It's in," he repeated. "On the machines. 'It'll stir up correspondence anyway,' Mr. Basting said. 'There'll be plenty of people glad enough to point out the error,' he said. He said we don't get a letter putting its foot in it right up to the neck every week, he said. 'And what's more,' he said—"

Never, even in my schoolmastering days (except perhaps in the matter of the changing-room pegs in Poole's time) have I met so utterly irresponsible an attitude. "Listen to me, Partridge," I said. "I think you are mistaking your man. You may tell your Editor from me that if my letter is printed I shall not hesitate to write him another, which he will not like. He has no business to include correspondence, written, as I say, in ignorance of the facts—"

"Look," the boy had the impertinence to reply, "if we cut out letters just because they were written in ignorance of the facts, we wouldn't have no correspondence. 'Bung it in,' Mr. Basting said to me—"

I was not prepared, of course, to listen to this kind of talk. "Bung it in," indeed! Sometimes I wonder what the world is coming to, when young flippertigibbets, scarcely out of their teens to judge by their voices, can speak in that strain to a man old enough to have forgotten more than they ever learnt. If this is what comes of trying to give a helping hand to the people of this village they will soon find that they have a very different kettle of fish to deal with. It is all very well to pester me to dress up as Father Christmas next December and have this extraordinary scene with Mrs. Linden, if that was the name, and do this, that and the other thing, but if all I am to get in return is a lot of inaccurate gossip about throwing carrots, at my age, and now this trouble with the *Advertiser*, I might as well go back to Burgrove and try to hammer a bit of sense into a lot of boys who, with all their faults, never dreamed of using strong language in my presence. There is such a thing as flogging a dead horse, as I shall tell them.

Next week: A Trip to New York



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